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Since the founding of the United States of America, there have been just 34 female governors and, as of yet, no female president or vice president (CAWP, 2014). Today, women comprise just 18.3% of the Congress and only 5 of the 50 governors are female (CAWP, 2014). This disparity may be the result of the perception that electing individuals to positions of power that impact millions of people is still predominantly a male bastion (Watson, 2006). Female politicians who seek election to public office often face biased media coverage and receive greater attention to their physical appearance, including clothing, hair, and shoes, than they do for more substantive issues (Baxter & Lansing, 1980; Carroll, 1985; Falk, 2010; Siegel, 2009; Watson, 2006). While previous studies have analyzed the increased scrutiny female politicians face with respect to appearance (Carlin & Winfrey, 2010; Falk, 2010) none have addressed the underlying reasons for it. This study fills that gap in the literature.

The purpose of this dissertation is to understand the lived experience of the female politician from a phenomenological perspective. Thus the guiding question of the research is: *What is it like to be a female politician?* Two objectives were developed to address the research question: (a) to explore the role of appearance management in the marketing of the female politician; and (b) to investigate how issues of gender and power shape others' interpretations of the female politician. This study integrates literature on

dress and appearance management with that of political marketing and women's studies to address the topic, and considers the gender hierarchies and power dynamics that surface using Freud's psychoanalytical theories from a feminist perspective.

Three methods of data collection were employed, including in-depth interviews, focus groups, and secondary supplemental data analysis. A concentric circle approach based on Strauss and Corbin's (1994) conditional matrix allowed for creation of a holistic participant sample. Four female politicians, including a governor, a senator, a state senator and a mayor, encompassing executive, legislative, state and local offices were interviewed. In addition, 17 staff, aides, political consultants, volunteers, media and PAC members were interviewed. Last, two focus groups were conducted with a total of 12 voters. Data were analyzed for similarities and differences based on the various perspectives of the participants' experiences, which were then used to structure three layers of thematic interpretation: (1) *Understanding the Lived Experience of the Female Politician*, (2) *Marketing the Female Politician*, and (3) *Voting for the Female Politician*.

Utilizing the theories of Freud, this dissertation is the first to attempt to explain the impact of modern day manifestations of power and gender dynamics within the lived experience of female politicians. Findings reveal the struggles specific to female politicians, such as impossible appearance standards, issues of self-doubt, trouble building credibility and dealing with the old boys' network, as well as subtle forms of

discrimination, such as lack of access to critical resources. This interdisciplinary study reveals how appearance is used as a code to indicate deeply-held, unconscious biases that facilitate the ongoing objectification of female politicians, and points to the pressing need for further research on the topic of appearance and political marketing.

MARKETING THE FEMALE POLITICIAN:
AN EXPLORATION OF GENDER,
APPEARANCE, AND POWER

by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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6t-[ew

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A politician who looks the part of an elected official is typically considered to be more electable (Hoegg & Lewis, 2011; Lenz & Lawson, 2011). Today's elections are largely marketing driven, with political campaigns carefully crafted at every level, from city council to Presidential candidates. Even the smallest detail is not overlooked, as it could have bearing on the "image" of the candidate conveyed to the voting public. This image has become central to many campaigns and is often the driving force in voter response (De Landtsheer, De Vries & Vertessen, 2008; Falk, 2010; Hoegg & Lewis, 2011).

Indeed, voters often make a choice based on who they identify with emotionally, even more so than the candidate's agenda (De Landtsheer et al., 2008; Guzmán & Sierra, 2009; Hoegg & Lewis, 2011; Jackson, 2003; Lawson, Lenz, Baker, & Myers, 2010; Lenz & Lawson, 2011). To this end, politicians will employ various tactics to appear more likeable and relatable (De Landtsheer, et al., 2008; Hoegg & Lewis, 2011). Every aspect of appearance, including hairstyle, tie color, and even footwear is carefully selected to express a specific image designed to elicit a specific emotional response among voters (De Landtsheer et al., 2008; Hoegg & Lewis, 2011; Jackson, 2003; Lenz & Lawson, 2011). As a result, appearance management has become a critical aspect of political marketing to the extent that it can easily affect election outcomes (Hoegg & Lewis,

2011). The notion of appearance management has become particularly salient for females, as their presence in politics has increased in the past few decades. The literature reveals that when compared to males, female candidates receive more attention for their physical appearance, clothing, hair, and shoes than they do for more substantive issues (Falk, 2010; Uscinski & Goren, 2011; Watson, 2006). The media is largely the cause of this, as was particularly obvious in the 2008 democratic primaries when Senator Hillary Clinton's appearance was discussed in 29% of the articles that mentioned her during the first month after declaring her candidacy (Falk, 2010). Known for wearing pantsuits, Senator Clinton's image, a major focus, was that of an angry female who alienated men as well as many young women (Mandziuk, 2008). The media promoted sexist remarks and biased coverage presenting Clinton as "castrating," "bitchy," and "scary" (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009, p. 337; Conte, 2010; Falk, 2010, p. 161, 165).

Providing an interesting contrast to Senator Clinton's unfeminine appearance in the same election, Governor Sarah Palin's overly feminine appearance also induced sexist remarks and biased media coverage. Governor Palin's appearance was cited in 14% of the articles written about her in *Newsweek* and *Time* magazine as compared to no citations regarding the appearance of her competitor, Senator Joe Biden (Washburn & Washburn, 2011). Palin's image and appearance read as "too sexy" and elicited comments from media, politicians and voters alike (Siegel, 2009; Washburn & Washburn, 2011). The objectification of her image even included a blow-up doll dressed in a tightly fitting business suit with accompanying instructions to "blow her up and show her how you are going to vote" (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009, p. 330). Palin's apparel choices

and her “sexy” image were used by the media to treat her as a sex object, rather than a professional female. Similarly, *The Washington Post* used her fashion sense to minimize her power, stating that, “Palin seems to dress for pretty rather than powerful” suggesting that she was not powerful enough to be elected Vice President (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009, p. 331).

This emphasis on appearance can be seen not just in Presidential elections but campaigns for national and state legislature, and even city council races. From clothes to shoes, height to weight, hair to make-up, to how much cleavage or legs are shown, female candidates face greater appearance-related scrutiny than their male counterparts (Falk, 2010; Mandziuk, 2008). This dissertation explores the underlying reasons for this overt focus on appearance with respect to female political candidates and investigates the role it plays within political marketing.

Background

Women in Office

Women won the right to vote in 1920 following the ratification of the nineteenth amendment to the United States constitution by Tennessee, the 36th state legislature to do so. Reasons for opposition were largely based on the notion that women were considered to be emotional creatures, incapable of making sound political decisions (Atkinson, 1988; Keith, 2009). In fact, on the whole, many men believed that women did not have any desire to vote, as they were instead being represented by their husbands (Atkinson, 1988). Moreover, it was believed that politics would corrupt women and they would stop getting

married, having children and the human race would cease to exist (Atkinson, 1988).

However, winning the debate and ultimately the right to vote, the next hurdle was getting women elected to office.

In the mid 1960s, when John Lindsay was the mayor of New York, a female reporter asked him why there were not many women commissioners in his administration. He answered, “Honey, whatever women do, they do best after dark” (Tolchin & Tolchin, 1973, p. 13). Even today women continue to face hurdles in the political sphere. Since the founding of the country, only 2% of members of congress have been women (Lawrence & Rose, 2010). According to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) the United States has had only 34 female governors to date, with just 5 females currently in office (CAWP, 2014). Today, women comprise only 18.5% of the Congress and the idea of seeking power that impacts millions of people is still seen as a predominantly male bastion (Watson, 2006). This inequity exists despite the fact that there are 81.7 million registered female voters, over 10 million more than the 71.4 million registered males (CAWP, 2014). Women also tend to vote in larger numbers. For example, approximately 70 million women voted in the 2008 election compared to 60 million men (CAWP, 2011).

After a decline in the number of females elected during the 2010 elections, the 2012 elections resulted in an increase, particularly in the national congressional elections. Total females in the Senate increased to 20 and total female representatives grew to 78 in the 113th Congress. Despite such recent advances, after 94 years, women have yet to crack the highest glass ceiling by becoming president or vice president. The 2012

Presidential race was between two male candidates, with two males running as Vice Presidential nominees. Such gendered power dynamics promote inequality in decision-making down the line. For instance, the appointment of an all-male panel voting on women's reproductive rights (Flock, 2012), or a predominantly male congress voting on the Violence Against Women Act (Heil, 2012). In the 2012 elections, Representative Todd Akin, who was running for a senate seat, said that if a woman were "legitimately" raped, her body would shut down, making it impossible to get pregnant (Black, 2012). Similarly, Richard Mourdock, another Senate hopeful, commented that when a woman gets pregnant from a rape it is "what God intended to happen" (Black, 2012). Furthermore, Paul Ryan, the Vice Presidential candidate co-sponsored legislation that tried to distinguish between statutory rape and "forcible" rape (Sonmez, 2012). Such statements reflect a serious lack of understanding with regard to a fundamental issue that affects all women. In addition, women politicians are more likely to support issues such as childcare, care for the elderly, health-care, education and the environment, issues that have previously been ignored by male-dominant representative bodies (Boxer & Boxer, 1994; Smeal, 1984).

Although most levels of the political field have seen campaigns by females, few women are elected to state and national offices. This is due to several factors, such as lack of support from political parties, electorate bias, as well as biased media coverage, all of which hinder women from becoming elected officials, and particularly so for female minorities (Baxter & Lansing, 1980; Carroll, 1985; Falk, 2010; Watson, 2006).

Gender bias, especially with respect to stereotypes of appearance, continues to facilitate the underrepresentation of women in politics nearly a century after they garnered the right to vote.

Appearance and Bias

When Julie Darco, a young teenager, told President Nixon that she wanted to get into politics, he told her that she was too pretty and she should probably get married instead (Tolchin & Tolchin, 1973). About 35 years later, Vice Presidential candidate and Alaska Governor Sarah Palin was referred to as “Caribou Barbie” by Pulitzer prize winning *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Dowd, 2008). Even today women in the United States face an uphill climb to get elected to public office, being judged on their appearance rather than their professional credentials (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009).

Over the years there have been nine female presidential candidates. In an analysis of media coverage of their campaigns, Falk (2010) notes that even though the number of women in public office has changed over the past 130 years, the media’s propensity to comment on their clothing has not. In politics, a woman’s dress is used as an indicator of her character flaws and becomes a point of reference for determining whether she is performing an intelligible and acceptable version of gender in the public realm (Mandziuk, 2008). Voters often use gender as a low-information shortcut to estimate a candidate’s stance on policy issues and even competence (Sanbonmatsu, 2002). A woman is judged on her ability to perform gender-based stereotypes, such as being self-effacing, compliant, submissive, and cooperative as communicated via her appearance

and clothing choices (Mandziuk, 2008; Manning, 2006). However, being an elected official means breaking from such gender norms, therefore women often face backlash in their attempts to take office. Negative media bias as well as those of fellow politicians and the general public can affect voting, particularly when a female candidate is viewed as less competent or effective than a male (Falk, 2010; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). Such factors can make for significant disadvantages for female candidates and even impact election outcomes (Falk, 2010; Kahn, 1992; Uscinski & Goren, 2011).

Such biases often exist at an unconscious level, as several studies reveal a degree of unconscious sexism regarding female candidates (Paul & Smith, 2008; Sanbonmatsu, 2002; Tosone, 2009). For example, Paul and Smith (2008) note that a third of the American population believes that their neighbors would be unwilling to vote for a woman. Similarly, hypothetical male candidates often receive higher ratings than hypothetical female candidates. In a résumé test, men evaluated female applicants more harshly and when asked to comment about it, the men said they felt fear, envy and intimidation regarding these applicants (Tosone, 2009). Tosone (2009) posits that men are often uncomfortable with powerful or successful women and therefore resist female leaders.

When a woman runs for political office she is attempting to gain power. This is a problem, as according to some theorists the female political candidate is ultimately attempting to move from object to subject (Edwards, 2009; Mitchell, 1974; Tosone, 2009). From a Freudian perspective in particular, this movement instigates panic in men at an unconscious level, where they fear that the phallus will lose value if the woman

becomes subject (Mitchell, 1974; Tosone, 2009). This idea invokes castration anxiety and motivates them to seek to suppress her attempts and force her back into the role of an object of desire or an object of exchange (Freud, 1962; Mitchell, 1974; Newsom, 2011; Tosone, 2009). Appearance plays a key role in this objectification of women (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Ogle & Damhorst, 1999). Several authors assert that the presentation of the feminine by the media marginalizes women (Newsom, 2011; Ogle & Damhorst, 1999) and diminishes women's intellectual capabilities and substance (Siegel, 2009). As more women run for political office, appearance-related issues will undoubtedly continue to be central and therefore must be understood in-depth. To achieve this understanding, this dissertation garnered insights from a myriad of sources, including voters, volunteers, political strategists, consultants, aides, and the political candidates themselves. Approaching the topic from such diverse perspectives provides a more holistic view of the topic than currently exists in the literature.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this dissertation is to understand the lived experience of the female politician from a phenomenological perspective. Thus the guiding question of the research is *what is it like to be a female politician?* Two objectives were developed to address this purpose: (a) to explore the role of appearance management in the marketing of the female politician; and (b) to investigate how issues of gender and power shape others' interpretations of the female politician. This study integrates literature on dress and appearance management with that of political marketing and women's studies to address the topic, and considers the gender hierarchies and power dynamics that surface

using Freud's psychoanalytical theories from a feminist perspective. As a result, this dissertation draws on a variety of academic disciplines, including apparel studies, marketing, and feminist psychoanalytical studies to address the research purpose and ultimately provide greater insight into the topic.

Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

According to Prasad (2005), the feminist research tradition is not only an academic scholarly tradition but also a socio-political movement to address "a wide-ranging system of ideas about the world from a woman-centered perspective" (p. 159). A fundamental tenet of feminist epistemology is that knowledge is co-produced, not discovered, and the conditions of its production must be critically examined and made explicit (Ackerly & True, 2010). A feminist approach is especially useful for this dissertation because it allows for deconstruction of the notion of identity and gender roles while challenging gender stereotypes and expectations that hinder women's progress, especially in politics (Hoogensen & Solheim, 2006).

Taking a dialogical standpoint, feminist researchers are unsettling traditional research boundaries by recognizing location, biases and positionality of the researcher while also understanding that the research field is not a self-contained location, but rather a space organized around networks of people, practices, events, and objects (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Taylor, 2003). In as much as politics can be framed as a lived experience, it is important to investigate the experiences of political candidates and their interactions with various people such as staff, aides, volunteers, Political Action Committees (PACs), and media that are involved in their daily lives.

To address the feminist and everyday lived experience considerations that are key to garnering insights into the topic, I employ a phenomenological methodological approach in this dissertation. As will be discussed in Chapter III, I collected data using interview and focus group methods. I interviewed four female politicians in as in-depth a manner as possible to get to the essence of the lived experience (Merriam, 1998; van Manen, 1990). Interviews were also conducted with seventeen aides, staff, PAC members and members of media. In addition, this study seeks to consider voter perceptions of female politicians, including how they decipher appearance cues in voting decision-making. Thus, I conducted two focus groups comprised of 6 male and female voters across various age ranges and ethnic backgrounds. By focusing on what it means to be a female politician, it is possible to study the role of appearance management in political marketing in greater depth and achieve thick, rich descriptions of experiences (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004). Interpretation of these experiences were then framed by a feminist psychoanalytic approach to understanding meaning assigned to women's appearance and what these meanings communicate about women as politicians.

From a theoretical perspective, this dissertation facilitates an investigation of how the interplay between gender, power, political marketing, and appearance management is critical to women's experiences as politicians. From a practical perspective, this dissertation provides insight into an overlooked yet critical topic: how appearance management plays into the marketing of female political candidates.

Scope and Significance

More than thirty-three countries around the globe have elected a female president and over twenty are currently serving in office (Newsom, 2011). The United States ranks 90th in the world for female representation in politics, lagging behind countries such as Rwanda, Cuba, Nepal, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan and China (Women in National, 2014). These numbers raise concerns about the “democratic legitimacy” of the United States and the fair political representation of all citizens (Lawless & Fox, 2012, p. 2). Furthermore, Lawless and Fox (2012) found that Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin’s candidacies reinforced voter perceptions of the negative media bias against women in politics, thereby keeping other potential female candidates from running for office. To achieve gender parity in politics, the underlying causes of such inequalities must be examined and understood. Several studies (Falk, 2010; Lawless, 2009; Lawless & Fox, 2012; Newsom, 2011; Palmer & Simon, 2008) discuss bias within media representation, including a repeated focus on the appearance of female politicians, but no study as yet focuses on possible reasons for such bias. Thus, this dissertation provides insight into the link between appearance and female politicians and thereby addresses a fundamental gap in the literature.

Appearance management is a critical tool that men and women use in politics from the local to the national level (Sanghvi & Hodges, 2013). However, it is especially significant for female candidates who face consistent negative media bias and a heightened focus on appearance as they attempt to gain political power. Yet very little research exists which specifically examines how appearance is used and what it means

for marketing a female candidate. By using a phenomenological approach to understand the lived experiences of the female politician and exploring these experiences within a feminist psychoanalytic frame, this dissertation provides a much needed foundation for the exploration of the role of appearance in the marketing of a female politician.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the topic and provided justification for the study. I presented information on appearance management in political marketing and discussed the role of women in politics. This chapter also outlined the methodological and theoretical considerations of the study. Key issues that define the scope and significance of the topic were covered. In the next chapter, I provide a review of the literature pertinent to this study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE THAT INFORMS THE RESEARCH

This chapter examines the literature pertinent to the purpose of this dissertation. To understand the lived experience of a female political candidate, several areas of research will be explored across multiple disciplines. Specifically, three broad topical areas are examined: (1) Political Marketing; (2) Appearance Management; and (3) Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory as a Conceptual Framework.

Political Marketing

This section presents a review of the literature on political marketing, starting with seminal articles that helped to outline the field of study and establish definitions of important terms. Discussion of the literature serves to trace the history of the field, noting major milestones leading up to present day uses of political marketing.

Political Marketing as Marketing

While the term "political marketing" was first used by Kelley (1956) in his book *Professional Public Relations and Political Power*, it was actually White's (1962) analysis of John F. Kennedy's narrow win in the 1960 election in *The Making of the President* that provided an intellectual foundation for the field of political marketing (Wring, 1999). Additionally, McGinniss's (1969) review of Nixon's political marketing in *The Selling of the President* fueled a burgeoning interest in political marketing (Wring, 1999). Both acclaimed publications became the foundation for many subsequent articles

in the area of political marketing. The publication of both books coincided with Kotler and Levy's (1969) seminal article titled, "Broadening the Concept of Marketing," which posited that marketing was to provide for and fulfill human needs, and therefore is applicable to various organizations. The authors' mandate helped to broaden the scope of marketing to include organizations, such as museums and churches, as well as issues, such as politics (Ferber, 1970; Kotler & Levy, 1969). At around the same time, researchers in political communications and political science, Glick (1967) and Nimmo (1974) respectively, began discussing the application of marketing concepts to political campaigns. These developments lead to the combination of research from political science, communication, and marketing that would ultimately create the academic field of political marketing.

From a marketing perspective, Kotler (1972) and Shama (1975) were the earliest writers on the topic of political marketing. Their seminal articles focusing on political candidate marketing depict the parallels between marketing products and services and the marketing of political candidates. Both authors analyze every aspect of marketing, illustrating how political marketing is within the purview of marketing. Moreover, both articles paved the way for future research by defining the key concepts in order to move ideas forward. For example, Kotler (1972) explains how marketing is conceptually similar to political marketing, and describes how a political candidate must be multiple things to multiple people. That is, he/she often needs to develop platforms to appease four distinct "markets," namely the voters, the political party, contributors and interest groups (known as special interest groups today). Often these markets are in opposition to each

other with respect to their expectations of the candidate. For example, a pro-labor stand may win favor with voters but may hurt financial contributions from the wealthy. Thus, marketing a candidate requires skillful maneuvering and a comprehensive marketing review to develop a platform that appeases all markets. As Kotler (1975) writes, “The very essence of a candidate’s interface with the voters is a marketing one” (p. 1).

In a similar vein, Shama (1975) explains how various marketing concepts, such as market segmentation, product image, brand loyalty, and positioning can be applied to political marketing. He argues that both marketing and politics use common tools for measurement and analysis, such as market research, concept testing, and communication. Finally, the author likens voter behavior to consumer behavior by testing the voter decision process using analysis of variance.

Rothschild (1978) challenged the marketing practitioner community to take a closer look at political advertising and marketing. He argued that political advertising has a strong, direct affect on voting behavior and therefore marketers can help to develop campaigns that effectively target voters in a cost-saving manner. In 1983, Mauser employed new product development strategies to devise electoral campaigns, the success of which made waves throughout the political marketing community.

While other researchers were focusing on marketing tools and techniques, Crosby and Taylor (1983) turned their attention to the consumer (the voter) and explored the various levels of voter involvement in political marketing. For example, a highly involved voter not only donated money and volunteered his/her time, but also put his/her reputation on the line by personally endorsing the candidate (Crosby & Taylor, 1983).

By the 1980s, research in political marketing continued to grow. However, a study by Hill (1984) found that of the top 20 advertising agencies, none worked on a political campaign in either 1980 or 1982. One of the reasons was a strong editorial in the *Advertising Age* by E. B. Weiss suggesting that political advertising could “blacken the other eye” of the advertising industry, the first being blackened by irresponsible advertising of consumer goods and services (Hill, 1984). During this time, the general consensus within advertising circles was that selling a politician like a bar of soap denigrated the spirit of the democratic process (Hill, 1984). In a survey of advertising professionals by Hill (1984), 71% felt that “political advertising has at times overstepped the bounds of truth and taste” (p. 181). As advertising agencies removed themselves from the subject matter, political consultants filled the vacuum, believing that advertising agencies were not equipped to handle the nuances of a political campaign. Indeed in 1980, Sidney Blumenthal, a famous journalist who covered politics for *The Washington Post* and who would go on to become an aide to President Bill Clinton, wrote that while politicians may win or lose, political consultants are a permanent fixture in the political world (Nimmo, 1999).

The advent of political consultants would, in turn, alter the dynamic of academic research on the topic. Newman and Sheth (1985) lament that “marketing scholars have not fully investigated political marketing at this point in time, and subsequently the field has not been developed to a high level of sophistication” (p. ix). The election of Ronald

Reagan reinvigorated the field and new research began to emerge in several areas, ranging from the effect of direct marketing and paid advertising to polling research (Wring, 1999).

Maarek identified three stages in the genesis of political marketing as stated in Nimmo (1999):

1. Infancy (1952-1960): President Eisenhower's campaign marked the start of political marketing.
2. Adolescence (1964-1976): An increased complexity and more refined methods for television audiences.
3. Adulthood (1980 onwards): Globalized exportation of political marketing (p. 75).

Further stages could be added to this model based on innovations that have occurred over the past decades. For example, the 1990s saw the fragmentation of cable television and the rise of the Internet, while social media has come to play a larger role as politicians have become celebrities throughout the 2000s.

Among the authors who have had a major impact and whose works count as seminal in the field is O'Shaughnessy (1990). In a review of the political marketing field, the author breaks the term "political marketing" down into several dimensions. The first being a mechanical level and based primarily on methods and applications. The second is more abstract, focusing on how political marketing reaches into the mind of the consumer, allowing the candidate to become a reflection of what the consumer seeks

(O'Shaughnessy, 1990). According to O'Shaughnessy (1990) the essence of marketing is reciprocity. That is, consumers are not passive objects and the exchange process is interactive (O'Shaughnessy, 1990).

Working from the definition of exchange theory, Lock and Harris (1996) provide a definition of political marketing as “the study of the processes of exchanges between political entities and their environment and among themselves, with particular reference to the positioning of those entities and their communications” (p. 21). However, by 2009 another definition emerges, proposed by Hughes and Dann (2009) based on the changes in the 2007 American Marketing Association's (AMA) definition of marketing, which altered the definition to more fully encapsulate the contemporary business and non-business aspects of marketing. Hughes and Dann (2009) define political marketing as “a set of activities, processes or political institutions used by political organizations, candidates and individuals to create, communicate, deliver and exchange promises of value with voter-consumers, political party stakeholders and society at large” (p. 244). Because this is the most current definition of political marketing to date, it is the definition that is used throughout this dissertation.

Political Marketing in U.S. Politics

According to Joseph (2009), political marketing originated in the United States with George Washington's Presidential inauguration, wherein he and several of his supporters wore a brass button with the words, “G.W. Long Live the President.” Today, political marketing has become the norm, as seen in the 2012 presidential election which cost over \$2.6 billion dollars (Novak, 2012).

Posters, handbills, pamphlets, and speeches at public gatherings such as cockfights or barbeques were commonplace during elections of the 1800s (Perloff, 1999). But it was the period from 1824 to 1852 that brought about the most significant changes to political marketing. During this time, party platforms, nominating conventions and national campaign committees were formed for the first time in an effort to create a more democratic process and give the voter a larger voice in the nomination process (Perloff, 1999).

Political campaigns created new ways of marketing the candidate. Andrew Jackson's 1828 campaign against John Quincy Adams is considered to be the first truly national campaign (Perloff, 1999). Lead by Martin Van Buren, the Jackson Democrats planted hickory trees and erected hickory poles across the nation, seeking to popularize Jackson's tough, urbane image based on the common lore of his nickname "Old Hickory" (O'Shaughnessy, 1990; Perloff, 1999). Campaign songs, ceramic wares and novelties were deliberately designed to promote Andrew Jackson's candidacy (O'Shaughnessy, 1990). Such symbols and non-verbal stimuli were used to develop a clear image of Andrew Jackson in the minds of voters, ultimately aiding his win in the 1828 election. Today, this use of campaign novelties continues to survive and even thrive. In addition to creating a national campaign effort, the 1828 presidential election saw a new breed of professionals committed to mastering the art of winning elections (Perloff, 1999). The Jackson Democrats energized millions of people to get involved, laying the foundation for the mass campaigns of the 20th century and beyond.

According to Perloff (1999), the first popular presidential election campaign is considered to be the 1840 race between William Henry Harrison and Martin Van Buren. It began when several Democrats raised the issue of Harrison's age, suggesting that 67 was too old for the presidency. One newspaper even suggested that Harrison be given a barrel of hard cider and a pension so that he could sit out the remainder of his days in his log cabin (The Log Cabin, n.d.). This criticism was then used by Harrison to create his "Log Cabin" campaign which portrayed him as a down-to-earth "man of the people," reaching the masses through songs, slogans, floats, coonskin caps, and hard cider (Perloff, 1999). Harrison was positioned as an everyday person, in contrast to Van Buren who was seen as a wealthy snob, and ultimately this led to the former's success in the election (The Log Cabin, n.d.). Various political candidates would also adopt this "man-of-the-people" persona, including the honest man stance used by Abraham Lincoln and the military hero of Ulysses Grant (O'Shaughnessy, 1990).

In tandem with the increased campaigning, by the end of the 19th century, voter participation had reached record levels, at a height of 80% compared to the average of 55% today (Perloff, 1999). It could be said that politics was a primary source of entertainment in the U.S. during the 19th century, as party membership was considered to be as important as church affiliation (Perloff, 1999). However, as new forms of amusement such as baseball, vaudeville and amusement parks appeared, theatrical political campaigns diminished (Perloff, 1999). Popular politics gave way to campaigns that were more educational in nature, with informational campaign literature being distributed to voters. This approach began during the 1876 presidential election, when the

Democratic nominee Samuel Tilden, who was running against Republican Rutherford B. Hayes, began distributing lengthy campaign literature about his background along with newspaper editorials (Perloff, 1999).

Advertising campaigns were first used in the 1896 presidential election, thereby starting a new chapter in the history of political marketing in the United States (Horner, 2010; Perloff, 1999). That is, while William Jennings Bryan, who was strapped for cash, undertook a 500-speech tour, McKinley crafted a front porch campaign delivering what looked like spontaneous speeches to visitors who would come to his home (Horner, 2010; Perloff, 1999). McKinley's campaign emphasized his personality, and carefully packaged him as a candidate through pictures, slogans and symbols designed to sell his candidacy to the voters (McGerr, 1986; Perloff, 1999). Moreover, McKinley's campaign manager, Republican Chairman Mark Hanna used fundraising by corporate interests, raising \$3.5 million dollars largely from big businesses such as Standard Oil and breaking records for campaign fundraising. However, this also brought ridicule from the newspapers, who claimed that McKinley was just a puppet of his campaign manager and campaign donors (Horner, 2010; Perloff, 1999).

By the 20th century, one invention would ultimately have a significant impact on the world of political marketing: the radio. By 1920, radio stations had started impacting elections and election news (Clark, 1962). For example, radio station KDKA debuted on November 2, 1920 in Pittsburgh to broadcast election news, resulting in the popularization of radio for political purposes (Moore, 1992). Consequently, during the 1928 presidential election, Republicans used five-minute radio speeches about campaign

issues to promote Herbert Hoover, spending \$435,894 or 21% of the total campaign publicity and advertising budget on radio (Clark, 1962). At the same time, Democrats used vaudeville acts on radio to highlight the merits of their candidate, Al Smith, spending over \$650,000. As the popularity of radio grew, it was increasingly being used as a medium for politicians to reach into the homes of voters. Radio became a critical tool to canvass house-to-house, and most importantly, to spread standardized campaign messages across the country (Clark, 1962). Starting with President Coolidge in 1924 and continuing to Dwight Eisenhower in 1952, the radio transformed the politician from “a poor platform speaker to an effective campaigner” (Clark, 1962, p. 234).

In 1952, Rosser Reeves, a partner in the advertising agency Ted Bates & Co., made history in political marketing by creating “Eisenhower Answers America,” the first television commercial for a presidential hopeful (Griese, 1975; Hill, 1984). This commercial opened the door for several other high profile advertising agencies on Madison Avenue to enter the arena. For example, Eisenhower, who used one such agency, was billed \$1.5 million for his election campaign in 1952 and close to \$8 million for his re-election campaign in 1956 (Hill, 1984; Rothschild, 1978). Candidates quickly realized that political marketing could work wonders for one’s image, and rapidly adopted advertising as a part of their political campaigns (Newman & Sheth, 1985; Vanocur, 1985). From 1952 to 1974, presidential campaign expenditures increased 690%, making it a very lucrative enterprise for advertising agencies and political consultants (Rothschild, 1978). Indeed in 1972, Nixon spent more than \$60 million on his campaign for re-election (Rothschild, 1978).

Television would continue to impact political marketing, and by the mid 20th century it was used to broadcast the debates between presidential candidates. In fact, the first televised debate, which occurred between Kennedy and Nixon in 1960, changed the dynamics of the entire campaign (Allen, 2012; Druckman, 2003). Nixon, who had been injured prior to the debate, appeared sickly, wearing an ill-fitting shirt and refusing make-up that would have improved his appearance. In contrast, Kennedy looked well-rested and confident (Allen, 2012). Those who heard the debate on the radio thought Nixon had won, while those who watched it on television thought that Kennedy was the clear winner. Ultimately the debates would impact over half of the voters and are therefore considered a significant reason for Kennedy's victory (Allen, 2012). As a result of his early savvy with broadcast television, according to John Harris, the editor in chief and co-founder of the popular political news website *Politico*, John F. Kennedy is considered the pioneer of intermingling celebrity culture with politics (Roach, 2012). Kennedy and his wife Jacqueline ultimately helped to create a celebrity culture through political marketing that continues to be important even today.

Alongside the debates, advertising on television began to play a significant role in campaigns. For example, in 1964 Barry Goldwater advocated intervention in Vietnam, while Lyndon B. Johnson assured the American people that sending U.S. troops to Vietnam was not a real solution to the issue. Capitalizing on voter fears, Johnson's 1964 campaign commercial, "Daisy" shows a young girl counting petals on a daisy followed by a nuclear explosion, selling the idea that Johnson was a peace candidate (O'Shaughnessy, 1999). Johnson would go on to win the election by a landslide.

On a similar note, Ronald Reagan's 1984 "Morning in America" commercials showed Americans heading to work, building homes, and enjoying sports and leisure activities, all designed to make Americans feel good about their President and ultimately help reelect him for a second term (Newman, 2001). According to John Heilemann, the author of *Game Change*, Ronald Reagan actually set the standard for effective communication in American political marketing and continued Kennedy's legacy of celebrity-based political marketing (Roach, 2012). The visual imagery and larger-than-life theatrics, along with a sizeable reach, have allowed television ads to capitalize on emotions rather than substance, which is a trend that continues to the present day.

The 1992 presidential campaign between Bill Clinton and George H. W. Bush used new kinds of media, including electronic bulletin boards, online computer services, modems, faxes and 24 hour news service with CNN and cable/satellite television. Clinton's campaign even created a "war room," providing rapid responses refuting George Bush's statements, but with "reality ... [and] hard numbers" (Myers, 1993, p. 182). Clinton used a commercial based on campaign strategist James Carville's memo "It's the economy, stupid!" that focused on the economic woes of the country under President Bush and thereby helped to communicate complex issues in a simple way (Myers, 1993; Newman, 2001).

In 2000, the George W. Bush versus Al Gore campaign saw an updated version of the war room concept, with email messages being used to proliferate stories and influence voters, as well as the advent of campaign banner ads posted throughout the Internet (Newman, 2001). Relying on various forms of media, chief strategist Karl Rove and

media manager Mark McKinnon created an image of George W. Bush as the “compassionate conservative” (Carney & Dickerson, 2000; Newman, 2001). However, all of this technology used for political marketing resulted in high campaign costs. In 2000, the cost of elections was 30 times higher than in 1976, estimated at about \$343 million (Center for Responsive Politics, 2009; Newman, 2001).

In 2008, the United States elected its first Black president in a presidential election that would cost \$1.3 billion. This election saw social media networking such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube gain importance in political marketing. The HBO movie *Game Change*, based on the book of the same name, explains why an interview between Vice Presidential nominee Governor Sarah Palin and news anchor Katie Couric had a profound impact in the campaign:

YouTube is making it exponentially worse. People are watching Katie Couric and Tina Fey (who had mocked the Sarah Palin interview on a *Saturday Night Live* skit) over and over again. It is playing like an infinite loop on the Web. No presidential campaign has ever had to deal with this before. (Roach, 2012)

Similarly, according to the CNN chief White House correspondent Jessica Yellin, smart phones and blogs turned ordinary citizens into journalists, whose opinions or recordings could also impact the campaign (Roach, 2012). As Sarah Palin was reviled through the powers of social media, Barack Obama harnessed its potential both strategically and creatively. Using Internet-based communication strategies commonly known as web 2.0, as well as social media sites, Obama reached millions of young voters, volunteers, and found new donors for his campaign (Cogburn & Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011).

Social media continued to play a critical role in the recent 2012 elections, as buzz words such as “big bird” “bayonets” and “binders full of women” stemming from the presidential debates were shared through Twitter and memes. These memes, or cultural ideas such as catchphrases that spread from person to person, can “go viral” when shared via social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter (Parker, 2012). A speech secretly recorded on a smart phone camera during a campaign dinner was viewed over and over by millions, hurting Mitt Romney’s bid for the White House (Ross et al., 2012). As Rodell Mollineau, President of American Bridge, a superPAC that recorded every word spoken by Mitt Romney and Vice Presidential candidate Paul Ryan, explained, “It just needs to be uploaded to YouTube, one person sees it, sends it to four or five other people, it gets Tweeted out and the next thing you know you’ve got millions of people seeing this” (Ross et al., 2012, p. 2).

In contrast, Obama capitalized on his online presence through such outlets as AMA (Ask Me Anything) on Reddit.com, garnering a record 4 million viewers to the site (Blake, 2012). Likewise, with 134 million Americans on Facebook, Naughton (2012) calls this popular social media site “America’s new swing state.” According to Naughton (2012), Obama had almost 5 times the “likes” on his Facebook page as Romney and over 19 times more Twitter followers than Romney. Significant online domination is considered one of the reasons why Obama’s campaign succeeded in this closely contested campaign. Whatever the reason, it is clear that technology is the basis of political marketing today.

Thanks in part to media influence, celebrity culture has come to play a greater role in political marketing than ever before, in as much as politics are now considered largely personality-driven (Roach, 2012). Candidates are often elected based on brand name, ability to create an emotional response among voters, expertise in handling current media technologies, and, like an actor, the ability to “project” (O’Shaughnessy, 1990). Political candidates now need to be more like celebrities with charisma in order to win (Roach, 2012). As research shows that voting is a personal decision often based on emotions rather than reason (De Landtsheer et al., 2008; Guzmán & Sierra, 2009; Hoegg & Lewis, 2011; Jackson, 2003; Lawson, Lenz, Baker, & Myers, 2010; Lenz & Lawson, 2011), at the end of the day the most likeable person is going to win, in that an individual will not vote for someone he/she does not like (Roach, 2012). Along with this, appearance has come to play a major role in making the candidate look approachable yet capable, while giving him/her star power along with substance (De Landtsheer et al., 2008; Guzmán & Sierra, 2009; Hoegg & Lewis, 2011).

From posters, symbols and speeches, to radio, television and the Internet, the evolution of political marketing in the United States, from the first to the 44th president illustrates the changing forms that political marketing has taken to connect candidates with voters and ultimately make or break campaigns. Conspicuously absent in the above discussion of political marketing is the female political candidate. In the next section, the role of women in politics is explored, and specifically how political marketing has been used to support as well as undermine women’s candidacies.

Political Marketing and the Female Candidate

Over the years, more than one hundred women have run for President in the United States. However, most researchers agree that of the lot, only ten gained major prominence based on media coverage and visibility (Carlin & Winfrey, 2010; Falk, 2010; Gabriel, 1989; Roach 2012). Recent years have also seen two female vice-presidential nominees, Geraldine Ferraro with Walter Mondale as the Democratic nominees in the 1984 presidential election, and Sarah Palin with John McCain as the Republican nominees in the 2008 presidential election.

Yet, as seen in Table 1, female interest in politics goes back much further, to 1872 when Victoria Woodhull, a suffragist, became the first female to run for president, sharing the ballot with Frederick Douglass (Falk, 2010). Woodhull was the first female stockbroker and operated a Wall Street brokerage firm, owned a newspaper and was the first female to address the U.S. Congress (Falk, 2010). Likewise, Belva Lockwood, a contemporary of Victoria Woodhull, was an educator and a suffragist. Lockwood was one of the first female lawyers in the United States and in 1879 successfully petitioned for the privilege to become the first female attorney to practice before the United States Supreme Court. In 1884 and 1888, Lockwood ran for president representing the National Equal Rights Party and was the first woman to appear on the official ballot (Falk, 2010).

In the 20th century, Margaret Chase Smith, a Republican, was the first woman to be elected to both the United States House and Senate. After serving nine years in the House and fifteen in the Senate, Chase became the first woman to have her name placed in nomination for the U.S. Presidency at a major party's convention in 1964 (Falk, 2010).

In 1968 Shirley Chisholm became the first Black woman elected to Congress. When she announced her candidacy for President in 1972, she became the first major party Black candidate for the post and the first woman to run for the Democratic presidential nomination (Chisholm, 1973). She received 152 first-ballot votes at the 1972 Democratic National Convention (Falk, 2010).

Patricia Schroeder was the first woman elected to Congress from Colorado. She chaired Senator Gary Hart's presidential campaign in 1987 before it fell apart after revelations of his marital infidelities came to light. Schroeder decided for a brief time to seek the Democratic nomination for President, promising a "rendezvous with reality" that would bring the issues of underrepresented Americans to the center, however, she would later resign from the campaign (Falk, 2010). Other women who attained political heights in the 20th century include Lenora Fulani, a psychotherapist most known for her stint in the 1988 presidential election heading the New Alliance Party. She became the first woman and the first African American to achieve ballot access in all fifty states.

The 21st century saw female candidates running in every major election cycle in an attempt to win the Presidential nomination. In 2000 Elizabeth Dole, wife of previous Presidential nominee Bob Dole, was encouraged to run in the Republican primaries for the nomination to the U.S. presidential election (Falk, 2010). Elizabeth Dole announced her candidacy in March 1999 and was consistently ahead in the polls, second only to George W. Bush (Heldman, Carroll & Olson, 2005). Despite the polling numbers, in May of that year, in an interview with Richard Berke at *The New York Times*, Bob Dole supported the candidacy of John McCain and expressed reservation about his wife's

campaign (Heldman, Carroll & Olson, 2005). This created considerable negative publicity for Elizabeth Dole and she eventually withdrew before any of the primaries (Falk, 2010). Analyzing the media coverage from the time Dole announced her candidacy until the time she withdrew, Heldman, Carroll and Olson (2005) found that Elizabeth Dole received significantly more coverage than male candidates regarding her appearance, personality traits, voice, sex life, and family. Dole later became the first female senator from North Carolina. In an experience similar to that of Dole, Carol Mosley Braun, the first African-American female in the U.S. Senate, ran in the Democratic primaries during the 2004 U.S. presidential election. She dropped out of the race just before the Iowa caucus.

In 2000, Hillary Clinton became the first American First Lady to run for public office and became the first female Senator to represent New York. In 2008, she became the first female front-runner for the presidential ticket. Clinton received 1896 delegates while Obama received 2201 in a closely-contested primary race, and is therefore acknowledged to have come the closest to breaking the highest glass ceiling in the United States (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Falk, 2010; Gutgold, 2009). Clinton subsequently became the 67th Secretary of State and is considered by many a front runner for the 2016 presidential elections.

In June 2011 Michele Bachmann, a Representative to the U.S. Congress from Minnesota, announced her candidacy for the Republican nomination in the 2012 U.S. presidential race. She won the Ames Straw Poll in August 2011, beating out the male candidates such as Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich, Ron Paul, Herman Cain, Tim Pawlenty

and Rick Santorum. However, she dropped out in January 2012 after finishing in sixth place in the Iowa caucuses (Roach 2012). Bachmann is also the founder of the House Tea Party Caucus and a self-proclaimed constitutional conservative.

Table 1. Major Female Candidates for U.S. Presidential Elections

Name of candidate	Year	Party Affiliation
Victoria Wood	1872	Equal Rights Party
Belva Ann Lockwood	1884/1888	National Equal Rights Party
Margaret Chase Smith	1964	Republican
Shirley Chisholm	1972	Democrat
Patricia Schroeder	1988	Democrat
Lenora Fulani	1988	New Alliance Party
Elizabeth Dole	2000	Republican
Carol Moseley Braun	2004	Democrat
Hillary Clinton	2008	Democrat
Michele Bachmann	2012	Republican

Source: Falk, 2010.

As Table 1 indicates, it is clear that though they have tried, women politicians in the United States have yet to break the “highest glass ceiling” in the country. This is in light of the fact that several countries around the world, such as Britain, Germany, Brazil, India, Australia, Iceland, Denmark and South Korea have had female presidents and/or

prime ministers. There are several reasons why the U.S. lags behind other countries in terms of its lack of women in high office, the most obvious being a gender bias perpetuated by the media (Falk, 2010; Newsom, 2012).

Several studies point to the negative effects of sexism and gender stereotyping on women's participation in politics, as well as a consistent, negative gender bias in media coverage and propensity to focus on appearance with respect to female candidates (Lammers, Gordijn & Otten, 2009; Mandziuk, 2008, Shepard, 2009). Falk's (2010) case study of the nine female presidential candidates from 1872 to 2004 revealed that the media reports on a female candidate's clothes more often than that of males. Likewise, Kahn (1994) found that females running for Senate and Gubernatorial positions consistently received less overall coverage and more negative coverage than their male counterparts.

Over the years, several women have competed for the White House, however, the Oval Office still remains an "old boys' club" (Jalalzai, 2010). Researchers argue that part of the reason is that presidential duties are gendered, with national security, economy, and defense considered more "male" areas, while healthcare and labor are more "female" (Heldman, Carroll & Olson, 2005; Jalazai, 2010). Indeed, women face the need to continuously prove their ability as leaders who are strong enough to make tough decisions (Falk, 2010). However, the female political candidate walks a fine line, as she must look feminine yet appear capable of handling masculine tasks (Johnson et al., 1994). For example, Geraldine Ferraro was asked if she could bake a blueberry muffin as well as if she was strong enough to "push the button" (Falk, 2010).

Clearly media bias towards women's appearance is a form of discrimination that has prevented them from reaching the pinnacle of American political power (Falk, 2010; Mandziuk, 2008). Stereotypes that women are weaker than men or incapable of leading the nation can be attributed to the "gender-trait hypothesis," which posits that voters may perceive male and female candidates as having different traits and thus competency levels, and that those perceptions justify the choice of the male candidate even though the female candidate is equally qualified (Paul & Smith, 2008). Schramm (1980) notes that an increase in the number of women politicians may not necessarily result in the feminization of the political process, however, they undoubtedly benefit from the increased visibility.

Media representations of female candidates are also, on the whole, consistently negative. Falk (2010) posits that the press has traditionally trivialized female candidates for presidential positions, portraying them in stereotypical, misogynistic ways. For instance, Sarah Palin was portrayed by the media as someone who says "stupid things" and was often referred to as "Caribou Barbie" (Siegel, 2009). Michele Bachmann was often called "crazy" by political pundits (Bernstein, 2011). Similarly, in 2008 Hillary Clinton was portrayed as masculine and threatening to male sexuality (Falk, 2010).

Women leaders and heads of state such as Margaret Thatcher, as well as Indira Gandhi, the well-known Prime Ministers of Britain and India respectively, were found to have highly masculine traits, and were even referred to as the "only men in the cabinet of old women" (Campbell, 2011; Falk, 2010; Jalazai, 2010). Yet these negative portrayals did not impede either female's chances for reelection (Jalazai, 2010). Compared to other

countries, gender stereotyping and media biases appear to impact female political candidates to a greater degree in the U.S. Indeed, the United States ranks 90th in the world for the number of women in its national legislature.

Through this dissertation, I posit that appearance plays a key role in the objectification of women and presentation of the female candidate within political marketing. As evidenced in previous campaigns of various female candidates, a substantial amount of importance is paid to her appearance and can significantly influence her success (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Falk 2010; Gutgold, 2009; Kahn, 1994; Siegel, 2009). Feminist scholars have argued that women are often subordinated and accountable to the notions of the feminine given to her by a phallogentric society that demands impossible emotional and visual standards of femininity (Butler, 1990; Hammidi, 2000). Moreover, according to Siegel (2000), the female body is “a symbolic entity that people in all cultures have wanted to dress in response to socio-cultural ideals of beauty, eroticism, and status” (p. 152). Categorizing women by their appearance is a way of controlling their behaviors in a society where they are objects to be traded rather than subjects in their own right (Mitchell, 1974; Siegel, 2009).

A female candidate often gets trapped in a double bind, in that if she appears too feminine, she is not considered “man enough” for the job, but if she dresses too masculine, she appears threatening. For example, in a study on women’s dress in the workplace, Johnson, Crustinger and Workman (1994) suggest that women soften up their appearances by wearing scarves instead of neckties or medium-heeled pumps instead of man-style oxfords. The authors indicate that by doing so, a woman can appear powerful

while non-threatening (Johnson, Crustinger & Workman, 1994) and the same reasoning may be applied to the ways that a female candidate's appearance is presented and evaluated. That is, it is clear that appearance is considered to be central to a woman's identity, and therefore it is a critical factor in political marketing when it comes to female candidates. The next section examines the concept of appearance management and considers what appearance means in the context of political marketing.

Appearance Management

Gregory Stone's (1962) seminal article in the field of appearance management defines appearance as a social transaction that helps to establish identity. That is, according to Stone (1962), identities are "established and mobilized" via appearance (p. 28). When an individual dresses him/herself, he/she is concurrently addressing an audience whose response to that dress is crucial in order to validate identity (Stone, 1962).

Kaiser (1997) defines appearance as a composite image made by the human body, including any "modifications, embellishments, or coverings of the body that are visually perceived; a visual context that includes clothing as well as the body" (p. 4). For Kaiser (1997), appearance management is defined as a process that starts with planning, thinking about or evaluating the social consequences of one's appearance. Aune and Aune (1994) posit that initial impressions are based on one's appearance and therefore define appearance management as the "grooming or preening behavior in humans" (p. 259).

Thus, the management of an appearance encapsulates the following:

1. Everything one does to dress oneself using modifications and supplements,
2. The process of planning, organizing and making decisions to dress oneself,
and
3. Assessing the personal and social implications of such decisions (Kaiser, 1997).

Kaiser (1997) posits that “dress” is a term often used interchangeably with appearance management. That is, dress, as a verb, means the act of changing or augmenting appearance (Kaiser, 1997).

On a similar note, Roach-Higgins and Eicher (1992) define dress as “any intentional modifications of the body and/or supplements added to the body” (p. 1). This definition includes several possibilities of modifications and supplements such as hairstyles, pierced ears, garments, jewelry, and accessories. Dress is used to produce and exchange meanings which are polysemic. That is, there are often multiple meanings communicated by dress, however, such meanings can also be vague and undercoded (Miller-Spillman, Reilly & Hunt-Hurst, 2012).

Each appearance includes several systems of communication within it, such as color, texture, fabric, pattern and silhouette (Damhorst, 1990). Each of these elements could have significant meaning when perceiving an appearance. According to Damhorst (1990) the “nonlinguistic, gestalt, structural, undercoded” properties of dress create a multifaceted method of communication (p. 2). Dress is also used as a conduit for communicating an individual’s identity and can communicate such identity dimensions as

social class, religious beliefs, group membership, rebellion, style, and power (Johnson & Lennon, 1999; Nelson, 2000; O'Neal, 1999; Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992). Likewise, Sontag and Schlater (1982) posit a “psychological closeness of clothing to self” (p. 1) and suggest that as a result, consumers view clothing as a part of their identities and use it as a format through which they establish self, expressions of self-worth related to body cathexis, and as an indicator of attitude or mood.

Although appearance impacts perceptions of self and others as a mode of non-verbal communication, it can also impact behavior (Johnson, Yoo, Kim & Lennon, 2008). Uniforms, such as those worn by police, the military and airline pilots impact people's perceptions of power and authority and affect behavioral responses (Johnson & Lennon, 1999; Johnson, et al., 2008). O'Neal (1994) suggests that dress is a political instrument used to influence formal and informal relationships. Appearance management is a way of dramatizing one's self and can often be used to define self and redefine the situation (O'Neal, 1994). In this dissertation, appearance management is specifically applied to understanding women and their identities as politicians.

Women and Appearance

Appearances are important for women in as much as the culture places a strong emphasis on how women look, including their clothing and grooming practices (Rudd & Lennon, 2000). Consequently, dress is an essential tool for the social construction of gendered appearances (Cahill, 1989; Michelman & Kaiser, 2000; Miller-Spillman et al., 2012). Dress allows for a quick appraisal of gender norms and is therefore often used to judge gender deviance (Butler, 1990). Dress can also be used to convey power and affect

power structures between races (O'Neal, 1994), gender groups (Miller-Spillman et al., 2012), and sexualities (Hammidi, 2000). Moreover, it can also be used as a site for, and a way to, fight oppression (Nelson, 2000).

Rudd and Lennon (2000) found that girls in the United States construct identity largely through appearance. Consequently, appearance management behaviors are used as a tool to exhibit agency and control in the lives of young women (Rudd & Lennon, 2000). The authors posit that “body image is a personal characteristic that affects how we interact with dress and how that dressed appearance is presented publicly” (p. 120). Hence, they suggest that body image should be considered as a critical component of the social construction of appearance, as body image perceptions interact with dress, appearance and self-esteem (Rudd & Lennon, 2001).

A woman's appearance can affect perceptions of her professionalism and intelligence, and is a critical part of her success in the workplace (Kwon, 1994). For instance, Goudge and Littrell (1989) found that in the workplace, dress is often added to the equation of job skills and luck equalling a job applicant's success. Likewise, Kwon (1994) found that clothing enhances a person's perceptions of his/her occupational attributes such as responsibility, professionalism, efficiency, and so on. Women use appearance as a tool to increase perceptions of competence and boost their value in the social and work arenas (Johnson et al., 1994; Kwon, 1994).

As described earlier, Johnson et al. (1994) argue that while women entering the workplace are advised to wear professional clothes to express gender equality, they must do so by appearing feminine. That is, women who appear too masculine may evoke

negative responses from others (Johnson et al., 1994). The authors suggest wearing feminized versions of masculine symbols so as to not violate gender expectations of appearance. This advice is similar to the popular book, *Dress for Success* by John T. Molloy (1975), which was aimed at women entering the workplace and popularized the concept of power dressing. Johnson et al. (1994) predict that “as long as our culture upholds gender differences in dress, there will be aspects of appearance that are reserved for one sex” (p. 30).

Appearance management is a process that involves trial and error to express one’s identity and personality and is enacted with others in mind (Johnson, Francis & Burns, 2007). In contrast, appearance perception is the process of observing and making evaluations based on an individual’s appearance (Kaiser, 1997). Humans are highly visual by nature and often rely on appearance to judge others (Johnson & Lennon, 1999). Another concept that relates to appearance management is appearance orientation (Davis, Dionne & Shuster, 2001). Appearance orientation is the level of emphasis one puts on personal appearance and includes how critical an individual’s looks are to him/her and the extent of grooming behavior he/she engages in to manage his/her appearance (Johnson, Francis & Burns, 2007).

Brannon (1993) suggests two perspectives to use in the study of appearance management:

- a) A self-system theoretical orientation, and
- b) A behavioral-system theoretical orientation.

According to Brannon (1993), the self-system theoretical orientation comprises thoughts and feelings about oneself, how those thoughts and feelings become strategies to conceal and reveal, and the expression of those strategies in dress and self-presentation. The behavioral-system encompasses thoughts and feelings about social implications of dress, how those thoughts and feelings manifest into selection strategies for a specific instance and for the desired effect on social interactions via impression management (Brannon, 1993).

The behavioral-system orientation is similar to impression management theory, where an individual may alter his/her behavior based on the impression he/she wishes to create in the minds of others (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Impression management stems from Erving Goffman's (1959) seminal book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, in which he describes how individuals as actors create, maintain, defend and enhance their social identities towards an audience, whether real or imagined. The individual's personal beliefs, what he/she thinks about the self as well as how he/she would like to be thought of, his/her roles in society, the audience's value system, and finally what he/she thinks others think now and how they might think in the future, all affect the way that individual constructs his/her impressions in society (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). This process involves deciding not only which impression to create, but also how to use verbal and non-verbal behaviors as well as props to create the desired impact. Once an impression has been constructed, it is presented and internalized by the audience, creating a perceived reality (Goffman, 1959). Based on how impression management is defined, as well as Kaiser's (1997) definition of appearance management as thinking, planning,

organizing, paying attention to, experimenting with, self-expression of, and the act of creating one's appearance, it is clear that impression management and appearance management are closely linked concepts.

While there is considerable research on women and appearance as it is linked to power, such as research on uniforms and workplace attire (Johnson & Lennon, 1999), there is a paucity of studies regarding appearance management in politics within the clothing and fashion scholarship. This dissertation helps to address this gap by examining how appearance management is central to the marketing of a female politician.

Appearance and Political Marketing

In the movie *The Adjustment Bureau* (Nolfi, 2011), the character of David Norris, a young politician played by Matt Damon, explains how his appearance is created “by a group of specialists” who test which tie he should wear or how much he should scuff up his shoes to appear relatable to his target audience. For example, the team suggests that a yellow tie would make Norris look unreliable while a silver tie would mean that he has forgotten his humble beginnings. Similarly, as the character explains, to appear relatable to a blue collar workers, it is important to “scuff up your shoes a little bit” because people associate shiny shoes with lawyers and bankers (Nolfi, 2011). However, shoes that are too scuffed may alienate the lawyers and bankers who make the donations essential to finance the campaign. Thus, Norris reveals that his campaign paid \$7,300 to a consultant to tell them how to achieve “the perfect amount of scuffing” (Nolfi, 2011). Although the movie is a work of fiction, it clearly reflects the growing trend of appearance management within political marketing.

Politicians are increasingly being treated as brands and appearances are a part of the packaging that sells the brand (Jackson Jr., 2003). Thus, the appearance of a candidate is a critical piece of the candidate's brand image, and one that could affect voter perceptions about the candidate's moral fiber, competence and leadership qualities, which, in turn, could affect election results (Goudge & Littrell, 1989; Kwon, 1994; Lawson et al., 2010). Politicians use props and non-verbal cues such as ties, hats, hairstyles, and jewelry to accentuate certain aspects of themselves based on the situation, and do so to demonstrate behaviors that are attuned with social values and expectations that they look good to the public (Mohamed & Gardner, 2004).

Leary and Kowalski (1990) state that the more public one's behavior, the more likely one will be concerned with how he/she appears and what this appearance says about him/her. Hence the individual is more likely to seek to manage his/her impressions. Similarly, the authors state that the effectiveness of those in positions of authority depend to a large extent on the ability to sustain public personas as competent and effectual leaders and that failure to convey such an impression may lead to removal from positions of leadership.

According to Guzmán and Sierra (2009) a political candidate's brand image is built on three factors: (a) the physical attributes of the candidate, (b) the candidate's personality and, (c) the candidate's promises to the electorate. Appearance management strategies help with the first two factors by highlighting certain facets of a candidate's physical attributes as well as aid in manipulating the impressions of certain aspects of the candidate's personality to win the election and maintain the image of an effective leader.

Traditionally men have dominated the political landscape as a natural extension of the sexual division of labor within a conventional heterosexual family structure (Carroll, 1994). Carroll (1994) suggests that one reason why political scientists often overlook this absence is because of sex stereotyping, which confines the woman to the home and family rather than the public domain (i.e. politics). Likewise, according to Dittmar (2012), campaigns are essentially gendered, as gender is entrenched not only in a political candidate's performance and expectations but also influences the psyche and strategic considerations of all who are involved in the process. To this end, women often have to act outside of their conscripted roles as mothers and daughters, and step outside of structural expectations of docility and servitude to engage with the public in a manner that exudes power and dynamism not often associated with their gender (Dittmar, 2012).

Despite the fact that more women have entered the U.S. political arena than ever before, they continue to face discrimination based on gender (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Falk, 2010; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Tosone, 2009; Uscinski & Goren, 2011). Media personalities such as Katie Couric and Susan Estrich publicly acknowledge the sexism prevalent in media coverage of female political candidates (Uscinski & Goren, 2011). However, the sexist treatment does not stem from the media alone. For example, a John McCain supporter, who happened to be a woman, called Hillary Clinton a "bitch" at a McCain rally during the 2008 presidential campaign. Similarly, a man shouted "Iron my shirt" to Hillary Clinton at a rally (Conte, 2010). Moreover, public office holders have also been known to make derogatory comments about their female colleagues. For example, Senator Harry Reid referred to Senator Kirsten Gillibrand as the "hottest

member” in the Senate, while Senate candidate Joe Miller inferred that Congresswoman Bachmann was a prostitute by saying she was a member of the world’s “oldest profession” (Conte, 2010). Research shows that comments such as “banging little body,” “plastic,” “cupcake,” and looking like a “turkey” are considered acceptable about females in power, particularly appearance-related comments that objectify women (Lake, 2013).

As discussed earlier, historically, there is a greater propensity among the media, other politicians and the general public to focus on the female political candidate’s physical appearance, clothing, hair, and shoes instead of more substantive issues (Falk, 2010; Uscinski & Goren, 2011). Such a focus can impact voter preferences regarding female candidates (Falk, 2010; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Paul & Smith, 2008).

Unrelenting sexist commentary, objectification, and overtly biased media coverage make a female candidate seem less competent or effective and can create significant disadvantages for female candidates that negatively impact election outcomes (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Falk, 2010; Uscinski & Goren, 2011). Hence, it is clear that gender bias remains one of the biggest obstacles to political success among women.

A system that devalues the female or feminine is a part of the fabric of American society (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Uscinski & Goren, 2011). Although people may deny having any sexist notions when asked, Uscinski and Goren (2011) found that gender biases are ingrained and therefore often operate unconsciously. Men view themselves as superior and more competent than women and often apply a double standard when judging women (Uscinski & Goren, 2011). Studies have also found that men are resistant to female leadership (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Tosone, 2009; Uscinski & Goren,

2011). For example, in a résumé test, men evaluated female applicants more harshly, and when asked to comment about it, they responded that they felt fear, envy and intimidation regarding these women (Tosone, 2009). Tosone (2009) posits that because men are often uncomfortable with powerful or successful women they resist accepting females as leaders. When women achieve positions of power, men try to put them down, often through attacks on their appearance, character, and competence (Conte, 2010, Falk, 2010; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Tosone, 2009; Uscinski & Goren, 2011).

As the literature suggests, widespread negative biases, which are often unconscious, can clearly jeopardize women's political careers. Although women have made many advances toward equality in society, the question remains as to why such negative biases towards women in power still exist, particularly among men. To address this question, this dissertation will employ Freud's psychoanalytical framework in the study of political marketing and appearance management relative to female political candidates. Scholars consider Freud a pioneer for his work about the unconscious mind as well as articulating theories, such as the Oedipal complex, that explain the psychosexual development of men and women and how this development impacts power dynamics between them.

Conceptual Framework

Sigmund Freud, an early twentieth century Austrian physiologist and psychologist is known as the father of psychoanalysis. Freud developed substantive work toward understanding the unconscious psychosexual development of children. Moreover, he proposed a three-part account of the structure of the mind, namely the id, ego and

superego, creating a radically new conceptual framework for understanding human psychological development (Thornton, 2010). Freud was also one of the first researchers to write about feminine sexuality, providing a catalyst for discussion of the female and the feminine, including among feminist theorists who have since engaged with, critiqued and revised Freud's theories (Mitchell, 1974; Saguaro, 2000). Delving into Freud's theories as well as feminist responses to them provides a foundation for understanding the ways that culture devalues the female and the feminine through unconscious sexism and gender bias, as well as the conscious objectification of women, and the implications of these issues for reading women's appearance. Because many of Freud's theories build on one another, the next section begins with a brief overview of his early theories of the unconscious as well as the structural model of the mind and the psychosexual development of children. This is followed by a discussion of how Freud's theories pertain to the topic of this dissertation.

Conscious and Unconscious Mind Structures

Sigmund Freud was the first theorist to apply deterministic principles systematically to the mental sphere (Thornton, 2010). Freud's topographic theory represents the three levels of consciousness that encapsulate the mental framework of humans. The first level is comprised of the conscious mind. Consciousness is a level of mental awareness that accounts for about 10% of the mental framework and operates on logical thought in verbal language form (Moore & Fine, 1990). Consciousness acquires information from the outside world as well as through the soma (the body) and the psyche (the mind) (Moore & Fine, 1990). The second level is the preconscious mind,

which is in between the conscious and the unconscious and accounts for about 15% of the mental framework. It is where memories and information are stored as readily accessible to the individual (Kahn, 2002; Moore & Fine, 1990). Finally, the third level is the unconscious mind. The expansive range of human behavior is explained by the mostly hidden mental processes of the unconscious mind (Kahn, 2002; Thornton, 2010). Indeed, the iceberg metaphor is used to explain the levels of consciousness, in that 10% of the iceberg that is seen above the surface of water is the conscious mind, however the 90% lying under water, which in this analogy would be the preconscious and the unconscious mind, have significant influence upon the part that is available for direct access. Consequently, the unconscious mind often determines how the conscious mind will react (Kahn, 2002; Thornton, 2010).

Freud further delves into the conscious and the unconscious and describes the structure of the mind using a tripartite model (Thornton, 2010). Freud distinguishes three structural elements within the mind, namely the *id*, *ego*, and *super-ego*. The *id* is the part of the mental sphere where the instinctual sexual drives that require satisfaction are situated. Freud believes that sexual drives are the single most important motivating force of human action and behavior, starting from childhood all the way into adult life (Thornton, 2010). Freud classifies sexual drives as any form of pleasure derived from the body and not necessarily related to just sex. Freud posits that drives are essentially the human being energized or driven from birth by the desire to acquire and enhance bodily pleasure (Thornton, 2010). The *id* is therefore unsocialized and totally unconscious, working to satisfy drives without delay (Kahn, 2002).

The super-ego is the part that contains the conscience. It does this through socially acquired control mechanisms which have been internalized and which are usually imparted initially by the parents (Kahn, 2002). The super-ego is a part of our conscious mind which is informed by societal taboos and prohibitions (Kahn, 2002). The ego is the conscious self that is created by the dynamic tensions and interactions between the id and the super-ego and has the task of reconciling their conflicting demands with the requirements of external reality. The ego unifies and organizes the various drives and tendencies of the mind, allowing the human to function in society (Moore & Fine, 1990). The super-ego is often associated with guilt, the id with untamed passions, and the ego is good sense and reason (Kahn, 2002). The mind can be explained as a dynamic energy-system, in that all objects of consciousness reside in the ego. The contents of the id belong permanently to the unconscious mind and the super-ego is an unconscious screening-mechanism which seeks to limit the blind pleasure-seeking drives of the id by the imposition of restrictive rules (Thornton, 2010). While the conscious mind operates on logic and understands cause and effect, the unconscious mind operates without regard for reality (Kahn, 2002).

There is a significant amount of research demonstrating biases against female politicians at an unconscious level (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Paul & Smith, 2008; Tosone, 2009; Uscinski & Goren, 2011). For example, Paul and Smith (2008) note that a third of the American population believes that their neighbors would be unwilling to vote for a woman. Similarly, hypothetical male candidates often receive higher ratings than female candidates (Paul & Smith, 2008). Tosone (2009) found that men were

uncomfortable with women in power and evaluated female candidates more negatively for a managerial position vis-à-vis male candidates. Simon and Hoyt (2008) argue that role congruity theory could explain this gender bias against female leaders, as leadership is a trait that does not “fit” the stereotype and expectations of women. However Tosone (2009) suggests that while a theory like role congruity has merit, it does not adequately explain the tenacity of the glass ceiling. As a result, Tosone (2009) recommends studying Freud’s theories of the unconscious as well as psychosexual development, including castration anxiety and penis envy, to better understand the deep-rooted reason for gender bias against women in power, or in the case of this dissertation, female politicians.

Psychosexual Development

The theory of the stages of psychosexual development proposed by Freud is as well-known as it is controversial. Prior to Freud’s theories on sexuality, the convention was that sexual instincts in humans began at puberty (Kahn, 2002). However, Freud suggested that sexual instincts are present in a newborn child and continue to develop throughout a person’s life (Freud, 1949; Kahn, 2002). Freud saw psychosexual development as the “instinctual unfolding within an individual” (Kahn, 2002, p. 39). By sexual instinct, Freud means forms of pleasure derived from the body and not necessarily related to sex. According to Freud, at each stage the child focuses on particular erogenous zones (Kahn, 2002). The child must complete each stage otherwise he/she becomes fixated on that particular erogenous zone and either over- or under-indulges once he/she becomes an adult (Freud, 1949). The five stages of psychosexual development are *oral*, *anal*, *phallic*, *latency* and *genital*. Each are discussed in turn.

As shown in Table 2, the oral stage starts at birth and lasts until the child is 18 months old. This stage focuses mainly on oral pleasure often derived from sucking on the breast or the thumb (Freud, 1949). The anal stage begins at 18 months and continues until the child is 3 years old. This is the age when children begin showing a considerable interest in feces and defecation (Kahn, 2002). The next stage is the phallic stage, which starts when children are 3 and lasts until age 6. In the phallic stage children begin to understand anatomical differences between the two sexes and often show a keen interest in the opposite sex (Kahn, 2002). During this stage, boys focus on getting pleasure from their penis while girls focus on getting pleasure from stimulating their clitoris (Freud, 1949). This is also the beginning of the Oedipus complex, which ultimately is resolved in the genital stage. The latency stage bridges the beginning and the end of the Oedipal complex, starting at the age of 6 and lasting until puberty. During this stage, the sexual urges developed in the phallic stage remain repressed and children mainly play with members of the same sex (Kahn, 2002). The last stage is the genital stage where the Oedipus complex is resolved. It occurs from puberty onwards, during which time adolescents focus on pleasure from genitalia with members of the opposite sex.

Table 2. Stages of Psychosexual Development

Stage	Time Frame	Focus
Oral	Birth – 18 months	Child focuses on oral pleasure such as sucking.
Anal	18 months – 3 years	Child focus of pleasure comes from eliminating and retaining feces.
Phallic	3 – 6 years	Child focuses on pleasure from penis (for boys) or clitoris (for girls).
Latency	6 – puberty	Sexual urges remain repressed; children mainly play with members of the same sex.
Genital	Puberty onwards	Adolescents focus on pleasure from genitalia with members of the opposite sex.

Source: Freud (1949); Kahn (2002).

The stage critical to this dissertation is the phallic stage because the resolution of the Oedipal complex helps to explain the attitudes that males and females have about themselves and each other (Kahn, 2002), including male domination and the importance of the symbolic phallic power (Chodorow, 2000; Irigaray, 1977). Specific to this dissertation, the phallic stage helps to explain why female politicians are seen as a threat to male political domination as well as a threat to symbolic phallic power as they attempt to move from object to subject.

Phallic Stage

The phallic stage is divided into two parts: Pre-Oedipal complex and Oedipus complex. The phallic stage is when boys and girls find pleasure from their genital parts, namely the penis for boys and the clitoris for girls (Freud, 1977). This stage is largely autoerotic, whereby the child's individual instincts are independent and disconnected from others in the search for pleasure (Freud, 1977). The child begins to have an interest

in the naked body, is curious about the opposite sex and develops scopophilia and exhibitionist traits during this stage (Moore & Fine, 1990). Akin to the previous oral and anal stages, the phallic stage starts off as impervious to gender differences (Mitchell, 1974).

Pre-Oedipal Complex.

According to Freud (1977), in the pre-oedipal complex, both boys and girls regard their mother as their first love-object and their libidos are of a masculine nature (Zakin, 2011). Since both boys and girls desire their mother, according to Freud (1977) they are bisexual in the pre-oedipal stage. Freud believes that sexual identity “is not a natural pre-given essence, rather a form of individuation and differentiation realized through complex interaction between bodily drives and familial others” (Zakin, 2011, p. 8).

Oedipus Complex.

The name for the Oedipus complex stems from the Greek tragedy written by Sophocles about Oedipus Rex who unknowingly, yet as foretold by an oracle, kills his father, Laius, and marries his mother Jocasta (Kahn, 2002; Zakin, 2011). Freud uses this well-known story to explain how boys covet their mothers and desire to replace their fathers to be the sole successor to the mother’s attentions. The Oedipus complex represents the peak of infantile sexuality and exercises a significant influence, albeit unconsciously, on the sexuality of adults (Freud, 1977). Moreover, the complex explains the formation of the super-ego in boys and lays the foundation for gender relations between men and women. Freud presents his key ideas regarding the Oedipus complex

using case histories of Dora and Little Hans (Mitchell, 1974). The idea of the negative Oedipus complex, which is used to describe the development of the super-ego in girls, was developed through the case history of Wolf-Man (Mitchell, 1974).

The Oedipus complex explains the phenomenon of the boy desiring his mother and therefore feeling wrath and jealousy towards his father. The boy realizes he wishes to usurp his father's position and have his mother's affection all to himself (Irigaray, 1977). However, the boy realizes that his father is bigger than him and can castrate him. Additionally, his feelings of incest towards his mother create guilt for the social transgression (Zakin, 2011). At the conclusion of the Oedipal complex in boys, the child identifies with the father, establishes his super-ego and abandons his quest for his mother in the hopes that one day he will instead possess an object similar to his mother (Zakin, 2011). The legacy of the Oedipus complex is the formation of the superego, which guards the social, religious, moral and cultural values of the male child (Irigaray, 1977). Mitchell (1974) adds that the superego is largely the internalization of the father and the culture he represents. Kahn (2002) writes that a boy identifies with his father who has a penis, something the boy's mother lacks. Moreover, boys believe that anyone who does not have a penis must be inferior and feel incomplete (Kahn, 2002). Thus, because a great deal of importance is placed on the penis, the thought of losing it causes intense anxiety.

Castration Anxiety

In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud (1977) writes that boys assume male genitals are attributes shared by both genders. When the boy observes the genitals of a younger female sibling, a female playmate, or his own mother, he discovers, much to

his horror, that they lack a penis. The boy imagines that girls have lost their penises through castration. This conviction leads to unconscious consequences into adulthood, where men feel an enduring sense of disparagement in their attitude towards women and a low opinion of the other sex (Freud, 1977). Moreover, once men get over castration anxiety, they seem to gain an infantile satisfaction at the absence of the penis in women (Freud, 1977). Freud writes that to understand the significance of castration anxiety, we have to first recognize the importance of the penis as the organ responsible for the “hierarchization of the component instincts of infantile genitality” (Irigaray, 1977, p. 39).

Mitchell (1974) adds that a boy goes through castration anxiety when he realizes that his father’s penis is larger than his own. Although the situation would seem to render penis envy and not castration anxiety as a more apropos response in this case, Irigaray (1977) points out that castration anxiety was not unusual for boys in Freud’s time since they were often threatened with castration if they were caught touching themselves in public. Mitchell (1974) writes that castration is the bridge between narcissism and the Oedipus complex. The boy moves from autoeroticism to object-love and the penis becomes his link to connect to his mother. Therefore, the threat of castration is grave not only to the ego’s narcissism but also to the child’s object-relations (Mitchell, 1974). Thus, Mitchell argues that castration anxiety is the cause of the end of the Oedipus complex for boys.

The resolution of the Oedipus complex continues to exert a profound influence on the unconscious mind throughout a person’s life (Moore & Fine, 1990), and this may be one reason why men assume a dominant sense of self at an unconscious level. This may

also explain why an unconscious sense of superiority surfaces in experiments indicating that men prefer other males when evaluating résumés of male and female candidates of equal credentials and abilities (Tosone, 2009). Likewise, in a study by Paul and Smith (2008), the authors suggest that voters often use gender as a low-information shortcut to estimate a candidate's stance on policy issues. According to Freud's theories, this is explained by men's sense of superiority over women who lack the penis and therefore lack "the great lack" of castration anxiety (Cixous, 1981). Castration anxiety may also explain why men may think a female politician is not fit for the role of high-level political positions in the United States (Lawless, 2009). For example, in a post 2008 election study by the Pew Research Center using a nationally representative sample, 51% of the respondents believed that Americans were not ready to elect a woman to high office (Lawless, 2009). The next section delves deeper into what the Oedipus complex means for women.

Oedipus Complex for Girls

The Oedipus complex for girls is often known as the Electra complex. It is a term coined by Carl Jung, a student and later contemporary of Sigmund Freud. However, Freud rejects the idea of the Electra complex and attempts to explain the phallic stage for girls through a negative Oedipus complex (Kahn, 2002; Zakin, 2011). These theories also become the premise for Freud's work on femininity. Freud (1977) views feminine sexuality as a "dark continent" of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis, Freud (1977) explains, "does not try to describe what a woman is...but sets about enquiring how she comes into being" (p. 116).

Just as the boy happens by chance to see the female genitalia, the girl sees the male genitalia on a younger brother or male playmate. Until this point, the girl thought she had a significant phallic organ in her clitoris but now she realizes it is unworthy in comparison to a boy's penis (Irigaray, 1977). She comprehends the anatomical injustice of her situation and is forced to accept her castration, which creates in her a penis envy (Freud, 2000). Having a truncated penis, she cannot possess her mother (Irigaray, 1977). Additionally, the girl realizes that her mother is also castrated and she begins to hold her mother, and women in general, in contempt. This leads the girl to seek her father's attention and the feeling of contempt towards her mother is thus further exacerbated, as the mother becomes the girl's chief rival for her father's affections. Her father stands for the virility of the penis, which the girl lacks. However, like the boy, she has to repress her incestuous desire for her father (Mitchell, 1974).

For the girl, castration does not resolve the Oedipal complex. Instead, it leads her into it. Consequently, Freud claims that it is never fully resolved, thereby accounting for a weaker super-ego and a lesser capacity for sublimation (Zakin, 2011). Moreover, this leaves the girl in a state of "infantile dependency" with regards to her father and men in general, thereby making her unfit to partake in social and cultural interests as an equal to men (Irigaray, 1977, p. 40).

Being without a phallus means the girl has no power (Mitchell, 1974). The little girl grows dissatisfied with her clitoris and gives up her phallic activity, along with other masculine activities, as a child (Freud, 1977). The girl begins to feel inferior to boys, which creates in her a wave of repression (Mitchell, 1974). She now attaches to the idea

of having a penis to fulfill her lack. The girl is arrested in her genital deficiency, suffers from penis envy, and experiences a constant feeling of frustration at an unconscious level, one whose core she barely suspects (Torok, 1963). Since she cannot have her father, the girl tries to find ways of making a penis, thereby inducing the desire of acquiring a penis by producing a male child. She now waits for a man who will give her one. For Freud, the clitoris as a penis is now substituted by the vagina, which she values as a place of shelter for the penis that will give her a male child (Freud, 1945). This fulfills the circle the girl has to travel from becoming masculine to feminine, from active to passive libido and from clitoris to vagina, making her transformation complete (Irigaray, 1977). Finally, through this process, the girl is realized “as the desire to be the object of masculine desire” (Zakin, 2011, p. 9).

While making the journey from active to passive and from masculine to feminine, the girl unwittingly moves from subject to object. The woman as object is a significant component of Freud’s theories on male bonding, which he discusses in depth in his book *Totem and Taboo*, written in 1913. Freud explains the social bonds that hold men together using the notion of a primitive society where a man may deprive or exile his sons from enjoying the harem or similar enjoyments of the community. In response, the brothers band together to kill their father and take the women. This offense is akin to the Oedipus complex of boys and the murder of this primordial father results in totems and taboos (Zakin, 2011). The women in this context are treated as objects of exchange and not as citizen-subjects. Likewise, in primitive societies, marriages functioned as means of exchange and a system of communication, and in pre-capitalist societies kinship

structures and societal relations were formed through the exchange of women (Levi-Strauss, 1971; Mitchell, 1974). In such a system, a woman is simply an object that is traded and a sign communicated between men who conduct the exchange (Levi-Strauss, 1971; Mitchell, 1974). That is, the exchange of women creates a social system in which the men become the beneficiaries while women do not benefit from their own circulation (Rubin, 1975). According to Rubin (1975), the exchange of women is critical because it “places the oppression of women within social systems, rather than in biology” (p. 175). Through this system both Freud and Levi-Strauss recognize the profound differences in the social experiences of men and women (Rubin, 1975).

Based on Freud’s theories of how a woman comes into being, including how she develops a weaker superego, how she moves from subject to object, and that men view her either as an object of desire (mother) or an object of exchange (male bonding and kinship), a patriarchal system of power in which the female is subordinate can be explained. Tosone (2009) writes that since women do not fear castration, they have less motivation to develop a super-ego. The message women receive based on Freud’s theories are that “they are defective and unable to govern their desires” (Tosone, 2009, p. 6). Applying this notion to political power, these unconscious frameworks are played out in the political sphere where women are more likely to be viewed as less qualified because they are of the “wrong sex” (Lawless, 2009, p. 74). It is interesting to note that female politicians, in general, are considered to be less competitive, less confident and more risk averse than their male counterparts (Lawless & Fox, 2012).

Those seeking to overcome the status of the weaker sex often suffer considerable backlash from both men and women. Since women see other women as rivals, they lash out against one of their own looking to move from object to subject. As Maureen Dowd (2005) notes, women who struggle earn sympathy, while women who are strong and successful earn retribution. Women face criticism and hostility for wanting power because they are going against society's norms of how women "ought" to behave, violating stereotypes or displaying agentic behavior (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). The phallic society penalizes her by objectifying her body, suggesting that she is a bad mother, or referring to her more informally than to her male counterparts (Boxer & Boxer, 1993; Falk, 2010; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Tosone, 2009; Uscinski & Goren; 2011). For example, the press routinely referred to Hillary Clinton as "Mrs. Clinton" in print or "Hillary" on television instead of "Senator Clinton" (Falk, 2010), as they did for Margaret Chase Smith when she ran for president in 1964 (Watson, 2006). In both cases, the male opponents were referred to with their proper title of "Senator," "Congressman" or "Governor," indicating an attempt to suppress the female's abilities by highlighting those of her competitor. Likewise, according to Lawless (2009), during the 2008 political campaign, racist comments about Barack Obama received greater media coverage than did sexist comments about Hillary Clinton, demonstrating that gender bias is not newsworthy.

As seen in the 2008 presidential campaign, female politicians are still treated as objects and often described in such terms as "hot" and "cupcake," as significant attention is paid to objectifying them through appearance (Conte, 2010; Media Matters, 2009). In

contrast, for those who are more masculine in appearance, such as Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi, and Hillary Clinton, media coverage makes them out to be “ball-busting” iron-fisted ladies who are over-compensating for their penis envy (Campbell, 2011; Scott, 2011). In either case, the focus is on the ways a female politician violates gender and societal norms.

Another means of keeping the woman from becoming subject is to isolate her from power sources. As highlighted earlier, bonds are formed by men and women are excluded from participating or becoming subjects. Even today, women are excluded from informal relationships and networks of male colleagues or the “old boys’ club” (Tosone, 2009, p. 7). Women are treated as outsiders or made to feel invisible and not given access to pivotal information and opportunities (Lawless, 2009; Myers, 2008; Tosone, 2009). As politics is an area of male dominance, women seeking entry must be breaking the norm, therefore they are subject to greater scrutiny by society.

Over the years, Freud’s theories have been challenged, revised, and revisited. For the purposes of this dissertation, it is important to discuss the key theoretical responses to Freud, including those of Jacques Lacan as well as prominent feminist theorists. Specifically, during the 1950s and 60s, Lacan, a French psychoanalyst, revisited Freud’s theories, and subsequent feminist responses to Freud’s theories are often based on Lacan’s reinterpretation of Freud’s work.

Lacan and Psychoanalytic Theory

Jacques Lacan employed the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson along with the structural anthropology of Claude Levi-Strauss to revisit

Freud's concepts (Zakin, 2011). Lacan believed Freud's theories of sexuality were meant to be a theory of signification and a conceptualization of the symbolic universe (Zakin, 2011). Freud refers to the phallus as the most precious possession, however, Lacan asserts that the phallus is precious because it is a symbol of human desire. Patriarchy revolves around concealing the anatomical penis behind the symbolic phallus (Glass, 2001). Additionally, Lacan posits that the phallus is an expression of the wish to rejoin with the mother (Mitchell, 1974). Thus, Lacan "de-biologizes" Freud's theories and uses them to explain how the symbolic and imaginary are forms of representation that make the world intelligible (Zakin, 2011, p. 17).

For Lacan, the symbolic refers to when reality takes on meaning and significance through words, while the imaginary refers to when meaning and significance are attained through images (Irigaray, 1977; Lacan, 1982; Leland, 1989; Zakin, 2011). Lacan suggests that a child assumes a symbolic identity by submitting to the father and becomes bound by law and a bearer of language. According to Lacan, the Oedipus complex is a mechanism that facilitates a child's acquisition of his/her sexual identity (Leland, 1989). Moreover, Freud and Lacan's theories of 'Other/I' play a significant role in the devaluing of the feminine through religious practices, symbolic constructs, literature, and history (Kristeva, 1982; Otero, 1996). This is because the 'I' is perceived as distinctly male and the language of the 'I' is that of the father, while the 'Other' represents the mother, the female, feminine, that which is abject and horrible (Kristeva, 1982; Otero, 1996).

Lacan also endorses Freud's notions of male bonding in using Levi Strauss's ideas of transcendental law regarding the origin of human sociality (Zakin, 2011). Lacan

posits that social identities are developed based on exclusions that establish kinship associations and these bonds are maintained by mandates and further exclusions, specifically that of exogamy and within it the implicit idea of the exchange of women (Zakin, 2011). Within the patriarchal system, a woman enters as an object of exchange and the symbolic order literally submerges and transcends her (Leland, 1989). Finally, Lacan defines women as “seeming to be,” in the attempt to make or gain the phallus. Thus, women become the object of desire. Similarly, men who are characterized as “seeming to have,” in the attempt to have the phallus that they do not have (that is, that of the father), become the person who wishes to possess the object of desire (women).

Feminist Responses to Psychoanalytic Theory

Over the years, several feminist writers have written in response to Freud as well as Lacan’s reinterpretation of Freud’s theories. Prominent among the early responses are Karen Horney and Simone de Beauvoir. Both Horney (1926) and de Beauvoir (1952) suggest that women envy men not because of their penises, but because of the social power and position of privilege that men hold. Moreover, both argue that Freud’s theories hold a woman to a fixed destiny. Specifically, Horney (1926) advocates that a girl is exposed from birth to the suggestion that she is inferior and the masculine character of our civilization makes it harder to achieve sublimation. de Beauvoir (1952) holds Freud accountable for being inconsiderate of the social origins of patriarchal power and deems his theories inadequate to account for women’s otherness. Moreover, de Beauvoir (1952) is strongly against Freud’s idea of only one masculine libido and characterizes psychoanalysis as “sexual monism” (p. 52). However, like Freud, de Beauvoir believes

that one is not born a woman, rather one becomes a woman, and that femininity entails a social or psychological process instead of a biological or a natural one (Zakin, 2011).

Feminists belonging to the later era of French feminism, along with those affiliated with Anglo-American feminism have also written extensively on Freud and Lacan's theories. Prominent among these writers are Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous from the French feminist era, along with Americans Juliet Mitchell, Jessica Benjamin, Judith Butler and Monique Wittig, among others. In addition, Kaja Silverman is an American film theorist who also analyzes the psychoanalytic process in her works on cinema. Each is discussed briefly here.

Luce Irigaray (1977) claims that psychoanalysis understands feminine sexuality as contingent on masculine sexuality. Feminine sexuality is considered passive and receptive, while masculine sexuality is active and penetrating. As a girl goes through the negative Oedipus complex described by Freud, she actually moves from active to passive. Irigaray (1977) challenges the assumption that female sexuality can only be understood through the lens of male sexuality and argues that female sexuality is self-enclosed, self-referential and entirely separate from the traditional masculine parameters of Freud's psychoanalytic thought. For Irigaray (1977), femininity is something that is imposed by a male scheme of representation. Within a system where women are objects to be exchanged, they cannot claim a right to speak or participate (Irigaray, 1977).

Luce Irigaray (1977) writes that the fixation on the penis is not related to women's sexuality, rather it is a competition for men, and that women's desire is secondary and value-less in this version of the phallic economy (Irigaray, 1977).

Furthermore, Freud suppresses the maternal lineage (Irigaray, 1977), as he sees the little girl first as a little man and then as someone who wants a son (not a daughter). The objectification of women leads to “a masochistic prostitution of her body to a desire that is not her own” (Irigaray, 1977, p. 25). Women have an aversion to the phallic economy where they are cut from knowledge and power. If a woman revolts from the ready-made grids, men consider her contradictory, unreasonable or even mad (Irigaray, 1977).

Hélène Cixous (1981) wrote in depth about Freud’s notion of the castration complex and a woman’s place in society in her essay *Castration or Decapitation*. In this essay, Cixous (1981) posits that a woman is bound up in an oppositional, dualist and hierarchical culture, where man/woman automatically means superior/inferior. Cixous (1981) believes that according to Freud and Lacan, the woman is considered outside the symbolic and therefore outside law, language and any possible relationship with culture or cultural order. This imposed silence is what metaphorically decapitates the feminine and keeps her from speaking anything of meaning. She believes the reason for this exclusion is because the woman does not experience the castration complex. Additionally women are also defined as lacking “the great lack” (the lack of the phallus) and man teaches her to be aware of this lack, suggesting that without him, the woman could never exist (Cixous, 1981). Cixous (1981) also writes that femininity/women are often depicted as prey for masculinity/men. She adds that a man provides the image of the weaker prey to the woman, and she forces herself to resemble the image (Cixous, 1981). Thus, Cixous asserts that women are nothing more than visual objects for men.

In contrast, American feminist responses aim to revive psychoanalysis by reclaiming Freud's central analyses for feminist purposes (Zakin, 2011). For example, Mitchell (1974) investigated Freud's concepts in-depth in her book *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* because she believes his concepts are essential to understanding reproduction, sexual relations between couples, socialization of children and the social economy of a gendered society. Rubin (1975) uses Freud's theories along with those of Levi-Strauss to create a conceptual framework of the "sex/gender system" (p. 159) which helps analyze the nature and genesis of the social subordination of women. Likewise, Benjamin (1988) examines Freud's theories alongside Foucault (1990) to understand the power dynamics that produce gendered relations. She believes that while boys gain autonomy through identification with the father and separation from the mother, the girl's path in the Oedipal complex is more complicated since she does not get access to her father (Benjamin, 1988). By seeking to liberate herself, the girl connects her femininity with submission rather than agency. She idealizes masculinity, bestowing value on it, while devaluing the mother, thereby creating a chasm between feminine sexuality and autonomous subjectivity (Zakin, 2011).

In her book, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema*, Kaja Silverman (1988) posits that Hollywood has played a significant role in the "revisualization of sexual difference" based on Freudian theory (Silverman, 1988). The "male gaze" places the male subject on the side of the vision while placing the female subject on the side of spectacle, thus objectifying her (Silverman, 1988). In cinema, the female, as the castrated male, is excluded from symbolic power and privilege and

articulated through a “passive relation to classic cinema’s scopic and auditory regimes – as an incapacity for looking, speaking, or listening authoritatively, on one hand, and with what might be called a ‘receptivity’ to the male gaze and voice, on the other” (Silverman, 1988, p. 31). A woman’s voice is devalued and only represented as the Other to the male, as the female body is merely an extension of the male gaze and a mode to absorb the male subject’s lack as well as her own (Silverman, 1988).

In contrast, Monique Wittig (2000) and Judith Butler (1990) refute the idea of the woman and the feminine in their works on Freud. Butler (1990) writes that the binary of gender is used as regulating tool to differentiate and consolidate masculine and feminine, ensuring internal coherence of sex, gender, and desire. The notion of a real woman, according to Wittig, is the mark of the oppressor whose idea of femininity is based on compulsory heterosexuality. The myth of the woman, Wittig (2000) writes, is but a political and ideological formation to negate woman. Wittig challenges Freudian ideas of the physiological and psychological supremacy of males and its corollary, the inferiority of females, in her book *Les Guérillères*. Instead, she creates her own mythology to institute a new equilibrium in which female warriors rule men. In *Les Guérillères*, the women are not attempting to acquire a phallus through their rebellion, nor are they trying to compensate for the lack of the penis, rather, the women are creating a new myth that allows them pride in their own genitalia (Spraggins, 1976).

On the whole, feminist writers have probed and prodded Freud’s theories and Lacan’s reinterpretations vigorously over the years, positing their theories as a “description of how a phallic culture domesticates women” (Rubin, 1975, p. 197), as

Freud's Oedipus complex epitomizes man's entry into culture (Leland, 1989). It also reflects the "original exogamous incest taboo, the role of the father, exchange of women and the consequent differences between the sexes" (Mitchell, 1974, p. 377). Moreover, the Oedipus complex and its consequent explanation of gender roles point to society's repression of femininity and devaluation of everything feminine (Mitchell, 1974; Tosone, 2009).

While much debated within both academic and popular culture, Freud's contentions maintain their primacy and influence and are therefore worth studying for their unconscious effects on gender and power relations in society (Tosone, 2009). Based on the discussion of Freud's various theories, it is clear that males unconsciously embrace a lower opinion of the other sex and consider females as objects of desire or exchange. As a female politician can be viewed as a symbol of a woman attempting to gain power and move from object to subject, an unconscious panic is triggered within the male, who fears that the phallus will lose value if the woman becomes subject. This idea invokes castration anxiety, thereby inducing the male to lash out at the female political candidate in order to suppress her rise and force her back into the role of object of desire or an object of exchange.

From the early suffragist movement to the recent campaigns of Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin and Michele Bachmann, men (and women) have opposed equal opportunities for women in the political sphere through such means as objectifying the female politician, treating her with less respect as compared to male politicians, and denying her access to the old boys' network (Falk, 2010; Scott, 2011; Tosone, 2009). This dissertation

proposes to employ Freud's psychoanalytic framework to gain a better understanding of the how and why behind gender biases relative to female politicians by considering the unconscious mind and psychosexual development of males and females in the linkages between women, politics, and appearance.

Appearance is a key factor in how gender relations are defined and expressed, as well as how power structures operate in society (de Beauvoir, 1952; Michelman & Kaiser, 2000; Nelson, 2000). This dissertation is one of the first studies to consider the usefulness of feminist interpretations of Freud's psychoanalytical framework for analyzing and interpreting the marketing of the female candidate while focusing on appearance management. As women become more active in the political sphere, it will be necessary to understand how to best market them in a phallogentric society. The path to the White House may take women many more years, yet it is an inevitable conclusion. As Susan B. Anthony aptly stated, "Failure is impossible." Moreover, as more women attain power as chief executive officers, media moguls and as political leaders worldwide and in the United States, they are transcending Freud and Lacan's notions of a masculine/feminine binary, as they move towards more "genderful" options. That is, options that allow a multitude of gender alignments, including masculinity and femininity to exist simultaneously in bodies inscribed as female, and where women are not trapped as objects of desire but rather subjects of authority. This dissertation opens the door by employing Freud's theories as one means of interpreting the interplay between gender, power, and appearance within the lived experience of female politicians.

Summary

In this chapter I provided a review of the pertinent literature on the topics of women, appearance management, and political marketing. Key terms, definitions and discussion of the link between political marketing and appearance management have also been provided. Freudian psychoanalytic theories and later interpretations thereof were discussed as the conceptual framework to be used in the study, along with how key considerations of these theories are used to frame the purpose and objectives of the study. The next chapter outlines the research methodology employed within this dissertation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

As discussed in Chapter I, this dissertation approaches the topic of political marketing and appearance management relative to female politicians within a phenomenological framework that is informed by a feminist psychoanalytical theoretical perspective. Specifically, this dissertation seeks to understand the role of appearance in political marketing through the question: *What is it like to be a female politician?*

In this chapter, I begin with a discussion of phenomenology and its use specific to this interpretive study. I explain the research design that was employed to address the central research question and objectives. This is followed by a discussion of how participants were selected and description of the procedures that were employed to collect data. Last, discussion of the process of data analysis and interpretation is provided.

The Phenomenological Approach

Phenomenology, the school of philosophical thought on which interpretive research is based, originated with Edmund Husserl, a mathematician and philosopher (Kaplan & Warren, 2011). Interpretive research focuses on uncovering and explicating the meanings of a phenomenon, typically lived experience (Merriam, 1985). Interpretive research is based on a relativist ontology, in that realities exist as multiple mental constructions and the form and content of these realities is relative to the person who holds them (Willis, 2007). Phenomenology stems from the belief that reality is not a

tangible truth that can be found outside of human consciousness, rather it is manifested through our consciousness, or how we interpret the world (Prasad, 2005). Emanating from this particular ontology is an epistemology that is subjectivist, in that our understanding of a phenomenon is neither definitive nor objective. Rather, it is subjective and therefore reality is constructed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Consequently, phenomenology posits the novel approach to a phenomenon by directly investigating the data “without theories about their causal explanations and as free as possible from unexamined presuppositions” (Küpers, 2001, p. 294). Thus, phenomenology elucidates the fundamental structure of the world as we experience it (Hultgren, 1989), and this understanding is an end in itself (Merriam, 1985).

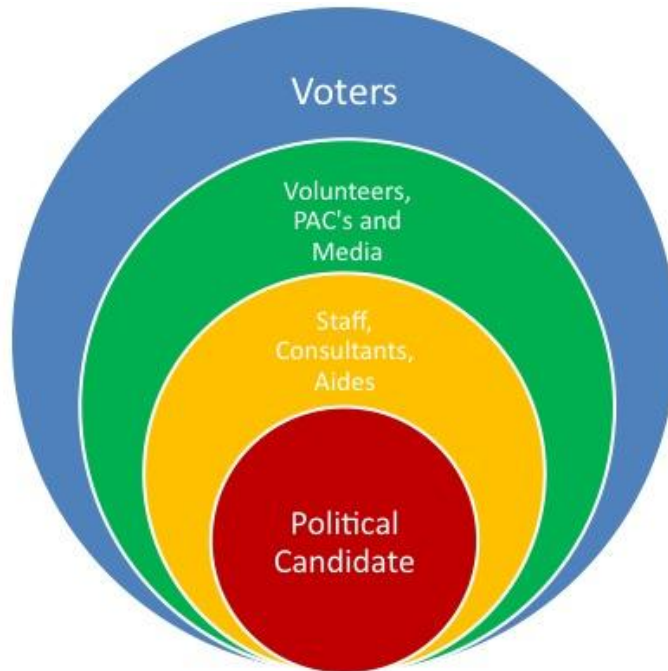
In researching human experience, phenomenology is useful for going deep into a phenomenon to develop an understanding of it (Kaplan & Warren, 2011). Hultgren (1989) defines a phenomenon as something that gives form to an experience, positing that phenomenology helps illuminate the essence of lived experience and reveal “meaning structures which are taken for granted in everyday life” (p. 51). These meaning structures provide the pattern of a particular lived experience that, in turn, becomes a part of other contextually-related experiences (van Manen, 1990). For example, a politician’s speech, a town hall meeting, or a campaign debate are experiences that are unified within her “being” as a politician. While each experience is unique in and of itself, together they are contextually relevant to the essence of her lived experience.

Through phenomenology, lived experience is transformed into a textual expression of its essence (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1992). This expression is analyzed to

extract the implicit and explicit psychological meanings to reveal underlying psychological structures (Willis, 2007). The result is a constructed, interactive interpretation that is “a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful” (van Manen, 1990, p. 36). In other words, it is a textual understanding of what the experience means. In the case of this dissertation, the focus is on what the experience of being a female politician means.

According to Merriam (1998) once the researcher has a grasp of the general essence of the phenomenon, he/she must then gain an understanding of the interactions and relationships that comprise it. In order to do this, I employed a concentric circle approach based on Strauss and Corbin’s (1994) conditional matrix. The matrix seeks to uncover the relevant conditions to determine the patterns of actions and interactions between and among the different social units involved in a particular phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The conditional matrix helps specify various social units involved from the most ‘macro’ to the ‘micro’ level (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The conditional matrix “can be visualized as a set of circles, one inside the other,” with each level corresponding to different aspects of the phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 275). Additionally, the authors specify that the outer rings stand for “those conditional features most distant to the action/interaction; while the inner rings pertain to those features bearing most closely upon an action/interaction sequence” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 275). In the case of this study, the matrix is represented by concentric circles, illustrating the various levels of relationship to the central phenomenon (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Concentric Circle Approach



As shown in Figure 1, the circle in the center of the figure (red) is the chief social unit of the phenomenon, the politician. The circle closest to the center (yellow) is also closest to the phenomenon. In this case, the circle consists of individuals who comprise the politician's "inner circle": staff, political consultants and aides who create and manage her political appearance and persona. The next circle (green) is comprised of volunteers, political action committees (PACs) and members of various media who have access to the politician. Often these people or organizations work with the politician to influence voters (Baines & Egan, 2001; Falk, 2010). Those individuals whose votes are being sought by the politician comprise the outermost circle (blue). Located furthest from the center, voters experience the politician primarily via images on television and information in newspapers or the Internet. Some may experience the politician through

campaign speeches or town-hall meetings and a very few through personal interaction with the politician. For the purpose of this study, each circle is addressed in the research design, as each helps create a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Data Collection Methods

The purpose of interpretive research is not to make generalizations or predictions, rather it is to provide thick descriptions of meaning relative to the phenomenon within a specific context (Geertz, 1973; Jax, 1989). Thus, to understand lived experience, it is important to be immersed in the environment of the phenomenon (Jax, 1989; Prasad, 2005). Likewise, the goal of the interpretive researcher is to interpret the meaning of human experience by taking a holistic approach, typically through various methods such as fieldwork, observation, and interviewing (Jax, 1989). In this study, a total of three methods were employed: (1) in-depth interviews, (2) focus groups, and (3) secondary supplemental data. These methods enabled me to better grasp the various facets important to understanding the lived experience of a female politician. Each of the three methods is explained in the following sections.

Interviews

Knowledge is not created in a vacuum, rather, it is constructed by individuals through social interactions (Kvale, 1996). An interview is an *inter view*, an interaction between two people based on a shared pursuit (Kvale, 1996). In interpretive research, interviews are purposeful conversations used to obtain specific information to understand what is “in and on someone’s mind” and ultimately gain a deeper understanding of that individual’s lived experience (Merriam, 1998, p. 71). According to Merriam (1998),

interview structures can be expressed by a continuum. On one end of the continuum is a highly structured interview, such as a census survey with fixed questions, and on the other end is a highly unstructured interview, with little fixed ahead of time, often used during a pilot or an exploratory study (Merriam, 1998). For the purposes of this study, semi-structured interviews were used, in that the questions were open-ended and less structured, and were established ahead of time. Semi-structured interviews helped give direction to the interview, yet allowed for openness to new directions that unfolded during the interview process (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

I conducted a series of in-depth interviews with four female politicians. In addition, I interviewed nine participants that are part of the yellow circle, that is, aides, staff, and consultants to female politicians. I also interviewed eight participants comprising the green circle, including volunteers, members of the media, and PAC members. In total, I conducted interviews with twenty-one participants.

Interviews began with non-directive or “grand-tour” questions, that is, questions meant to motivate the participant to talk and feel comfortable with telling his or her story (McCracken, 1989). McCracken (1989) also suggests using floating prompts, which are employed to ensure greater clarity and a deeper understanding of the response. Politicians are used to giving interviews to manage impressions, therefore I thought it was critical to employ different types of questions, such as hypothetical, ideal position, devil’s advocate and interpretive, to get beyond the veneer (McCracken, 1989; Merriam, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Examples of interview questions include: (1) *Do you think the voters are influenced by the appearance of a politician? If so, how do you think it influences them?*

(2) Do you think men and women are judged differently based on appearance? If so, how are they judged differently? Appendix A includes the full list of interview questions.

Interviews were audio-recorded with the participant's consent prior to the interview. Each participant was given a consent form to sign, or in cases where the interviews were done on the phone, the participant was sent the consent form via email. In either case, a description of the research objectives was included (see Appendix B). I interviewed participants at locations convenient to them to increase comfort level. Many interviews were conducted either in Washington, DC or North Carolina. However, in cases where the participant lived in a state too far away for travel, the interviews were conducted via email and then followed up with a phone conversation. In two cases, initial meetings were face-to-face and then followed up via phone and email respectively for the interview. The goal was to get as much depth as possible, therefore wherever possible I conducted multiple interviews with each participant.

Focus Groups

Focus groups originated as a market research technique in the 1920s to encompass the large group interview (Fontana & Frey, 1994; Kitzinger, 1999). Focus groups are inexpensive and help gather information about shared perceptions among participants that is not only cumulative but also elaborative beyond individual responses (Fontana & Frey, 1994; Kitzinger, 1999). Today this method is also popular among political marketing researchers, political parties, PACs and candidates to gather information about where voters stand on a particular issue or candidate. In this study, I conducted two focus groups with a total of twelve people to gather information on voter perceptions of female

politicians and the role of appearance in their voting decisions (the outer circle). Focus groups allowed me to explore multiple viewpoints on the topic. For phenomenological studies where the role of the interviewer is directive, Fontana and Frey (1994) suggest a semi-structured format to guide the focus group. Appendix C contains the questions that were asked in the focus groups. Focus groups were audiotaped with participants' permission. See Appendix D for the focus group consent form.

Secondary Supplemental Data

Document analysis is a systematic procedure to examine and evaluate documents such as campaign literature, articles, memos and pamphlets (Bowen, 2009). While the written text is considered mute evidence, it can provide significant historical insight into a phenomenon (Hodder, 1994). As Hodder (1994) explains, a text in and of itself is devoid of meaning. Thus, meaning emerges from the reading of the text in a socially constructed world. Texts are often used with other data collection methods and help with data triangulation in the study of a particular phenomenon (Bowen, 2009; Denzin, 1970). For the purposes of this study, I reviewed newspaper and magazine articles, as well as social media content such as memes that focus on appearance as well as references made by participants regarding specific campaigns, issues or politicians. Such texts provided background information on the topic and further context for the analysis and interpretation of interview and focus group data.

Participant Sample and Selection

Participant selection is an important aspect of gaining understanding of a phenomenon and ultimately to the success of any interpretive study. A significant portion of the sampling and selection process chiefly concerns “establishing an appropriate relationship between the sample or selection on the one hand and the wider universe to which you see it as related to the other” (Mason, 1996, p. 84). As mentioned earlier, using the concentric circle approach led me to include not only the politician, but those she is surrounded by and who interact with her at various levels, including aides, staff members, consultants, political action committees, and voters.

By selecting female politicians from local, legislative, and executive levels, I could study the role of appearance management in political marketing in great depth and achieve detailed descriptions of experiences at a range of levels (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004). Overall, participant selection reflected a purposive sampling method, in that I chose “informants from populations that manifest that phenomenon of interest and are ideally suited to illuminate the phenomenon” (Wooten, 2006, p. 189). Participants were recruited through referrals such as my contacts at specific PACs, political parties and affiliations, as well as through a network of political consultants. These connections helped me gain access to other participants, from politicians to staff members, aides, political consultants, media, volunteers and PAC members.

Focus group participants were recruited from the general population using a snowball sampling method. Age range and marital status of these participants reflects the general population, in that some were married, some were divorced, and some were

single. Some were retired while others had just started working, the rest have been working between 5 and 25 years. All were over 18 years of age and registered to vote.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Once the data were collected, I followed the analysis procedures as outlined by Spiggle (1994). I first categorized the data into chunks on the basis of meanings that represented parts of the phenomenon (Spiggle, 1994). Strauss and Corbin (1994) stress the importance of disciplinary and professional knowledge along with research and personal experience for enhanced sensitivity to coding and categorization. Thus, my immersion in the field, along with my preliminary research on the topic prepared me for categorizing and coding with greater sensitivity to the material. After categorization, I used abstraction to create “higher-order conceptual constructs” which took the categories and condensed them into fewer and more general ones (Spiggle, 1994, p. 493). The next step, dimensionalization, involves “identifying properties of categories and constructs” (Spiggle, 1994, p. 494). Dimensionalization helped elucidate conceptual meanings of the construct by comparing information across incidents to develop a greater understanding of relationships (Spiggle, 1994). The next step after dimensionalization is integration, which maps relationships between conceptual elements of the data (Spiggle, 1994). It is important to remember that these steps are not necessarily sequential, but that a researcher goes through several iterations, moving back and forth between stages. Spiggle (1994) explains that these operations allow the researcher to organize the data, deduce meaning and draw conclusions that help create or support conceptual frameworks or theories that describe the data.

Analysis was followed by interpretation of the data. According to Spiggle (1994), interpretation does not have specific guidelines, rather it is intuitive and comes from delving deep within the meaning of the data. Meanings and experiences that emerged from the data provided by participants helped form coherent patterns which were aggregated into larger wholes as parallel structures, themes, and recurring elements. A three part, layered thematic interpretation provided the basis for addressing the multifaceted issue of appearance, power, gender and political marketing. The first layer of interpretation is based on the experiences of female politicians. The second layer of interpretation comprises the perspectives of staff and aides to politicians, political consultants, members of media and PACs and volunteers. Finally, perspectives of the voters construct the third layer of interpretation. Each layer creates a deeper and more holistic understanding of the phenomenon from a myriad of perspectives. Such a comprehensive interpretation has practical implications for political candidates running for office, as well as theoretical implications for the study of how gender and issues of power dynamics are expressed through appearance management and political marketing.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the methodological framework of the study. I described the data collection methods I employed, as well as the participant sample and selection procedures I followed. I then discussed the approach used for data analysis and interpretation. In the next chapter, I present the first layer of the thematic interpretation.

CHAPTER IV

THEMATIC INTERPRETATION PART I: UNDERSTANDING THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF THE FEMALE POLITICIAN

In this chapter, themes that emerged during the interviews with participants who are politicians are discussed. To this end, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first part provides background information on the female politicians who participated in this study, or the centermost ring of the sample groups as described in Chapter III. The second part focuses on the themes that emerged from the analysis of participants' perspectives on what it is like to be a female and a politician. This part considers the issues that shed light on gendered identity and appearance, and how the two intersect to shape the lived experience of the female politician.

Description of Participants

Four female politicians were interviewed in-depth for this study. The four participants reflect local, state, and national positions within politics, while representing the breadth of political ranks in the United States, from legislative to executive (see Table 3). Pseudonyms are used in place of real names to protect each participant's confidentiality.

Table 3. Female Politicians

Name	Position	Branch of Government
Victoria Burns	Governor	Executive
Sue Ellen Rowland	Senator	Legislative
Joy Lancaster	State Senator	Legislative
Patricia Mitchell	Mayor	Executive/Legislative

Governor Burns

Since 1776, there have been only 34 female governors in the United States of America; Victoria Burns is one of those select few. She was the first and, to date, the only female governor of her state. Before entering politics, Victoria worked “with local elected officials in a fairly large geographic region.” Over time, she began to feel frustrated with the elected officials that she had to deal with in her job, and felt like she could do better. As she put it, “I got frustrated...and I thought, I can do what I am doing now and make money, or I can whine...and do nothing, or I can take a chance and run for office.” Victoria ran and won a seat in the state House of Representatives. She ended up serving in that state legislature for several years, in both houses. In the race for governor, Victoria campaigned against two male candidates in the primaries, and then a male candidate representing the opposing party in the general election. She won in a very close race, garnering 50.27% of the votes. Governor Burns was even mentioned as a potential future presidential candidate, particularly after Hillary Clinton dropped out of the 2008

primaries. Having served in elected office for over twenty-five years, or “a lifetime” as she calls it, she has many insights on and experiences with the life of a female politician, in both legislative and executive capacities.

U.S. Senator Rowland

Senator Sue Ellen Rowland hails from the Deep South. After college she worked as a staff assistant to a politician in Washington, DC and later as a lobbyist, before returning to her home state. Once there, she challenged the incumbent to become the first female elected from her district to the House of Representatives. She served in the house for six years before taking a maternity break for one year. When the serving U.S. Senator announced his retirement, Rowland decided to run for his seat. She won that election with a 12-percentage point margin, only to be reelected with another double-digit margin six years later. She is the second female senator from the state and served as a U.S. Senator for over twelve years. She was also identified as a possible vice presidential candidate by her party.

State Senator Lancaster

While State Senator Joy Lancaster is not a member of the exclusive list of female governors, she has campaigned for that post more than once. Unfortunately, she has lost every attempt. Joy’s entry in politics began as a child when she “volunteered for local campaigns as a kid,” moving up to assisting with presidential campaigns, until finally deciding to run for office herself. She lost her first campaign for State Representative to a male candidate by 50 votes. She thinks that this experience taught her the importance of timing, in that later, when a State Senator was retiring and encouraged Joy to run, she

took the chance. Joy won that election and became a State Senator in the northeastern United States. After serving for several years in the state legislature, she then ran for governor. During this campaign, she faced the same male candidate that she lost to early in her career, but this time she defeated him soundly to win her party's nomination for the Gubernatorial election. However, she went on to lose the general election by only three percentage points.

Mayor Mitchell

While both Victoria Burns and Joy Lancaster have reached the end of their respective political careers, Patricia Mitchell is currently working her way up the ladder. After getting involved in a zoning issue within her city, Patricia ran for City Council. As she explained:

The zoning issue gave me the platform to run and it also gave me a really good overview of how government works because we got really involved in planning and zoning and traffic and all sorts of stuff with that rezoning, so that's really what catapulted me into my first two terms.

After two terms, Patricia decided to take a maternity break for eight years. When she returned, she was elected to the City Council once again, and served for four years as an at-large member before running for mayor and unseating the incumbent by a margin of more than 19 percentage points.

All four of these female politicians have blazed trails and can count several firsts on their list of accomplishments. They have been among the first female politicians to chair committees, caucuses and task forces, from the local to the federal level. The political experiences of the four women encompass running for local level politics, such

as city council and mayor, to state level politics, such as state house of representatives and state senate, to national level politics such as Congress. In the next section, themes that speak to participants' experiences as females in the male-dominated world of politics are presented.

Identity and the Gendered Everyday

Females are still a rarity in American politics, particularly at the higher levels. Consequently, as women, participants have faced all manner of discriminatory situations as well as double standards, including the need to work harder to gain respect and credibility in the face of traditions such as the "old boys' network." Each of the participants described in detail how she regularly surmounted the obstacles presented by her overall marginalization as a female in politics.

The Credibility Factor

All four of the participants indicate that because there are fewer female politicians than males, they often have to work harder to appear credible to the public, especially to voters, volunteers, PACs, and donors. Moreover, the media plays a critical role in a political candidate's success or failure. Mayor Mitchell spoke about how, as a female politician, donors and voters alike acknowledged the business experience of male opponents more readily than her own.

People see me just as a stay-at-home-mom or community volunteer. The fact that I have worked for 25 years has kind of been put by the wayside and I realize that I need to get my message out that I actually have a very strong business

background. That's something that I have started because I don't want to be discounted by the business community as a nice little community volunteer who does bake sales.

When asked to explain why she thinks her experience is undervalued, Mayor Mitchell responded:

I think as a woman...it is easy to see me just as a stay-at-home-mom or community volunteer...I do think it is easier to discount a woman, so I am going to have to work doubly-hard to make sure I get that message out.

It is interesting to note that even though Mayor Mitchell won the mayoral election with a 19-percentage point margin, she did so with roughly half of the financial support that her male opponent received. Specifically, he was able to raise \$106,000 in campaign donations while Mitchell raised only \$50,000 (Fain, 2013).

Senator Rowland believes that the media plays a role in creating the public's views on credibility, specifically that of male versus female politicians. As she explains, "when the news is covering women candidates, they may ask different questions or they may ask their questions differently" thereby creating an uneven platform for politicians of both sexes. Governor Burns furthers this point, stating that "older reporters in a narrow environment are more caustic or more critical of women," ultimately making it harder for female politicians during press reports. Additionally, voters over 60 years of age are often considered to be harder on female politicians. Governor Burns suggests that among the 60 and older demographic, there are often "harsh stereotypes and harsh predispositions" against female politicians. Yet this group constitutes a significant portion of the electoral

population and is one that usually votes in large numbers. According to Governor Burns, this age demographic is more critical of female politicians because:

Their life experiences are that of the husband and the wife, the male and the female [roles that] have been based on a time that no longer exists. Ozzie and Harriet are dead and this is the last generation that lived through Ozzie and Harriet.

Credibility is critical in order for someone to be successfully elected to office, and then that person must maintain that credibility for the duration of that position. According to the participants, if something goes wrong with that credibility, female politicians are vilified to a greater degree than male politicians. For example, State Senator Lancaster talked about a female politician in her state who has currently implemented a major reform impacting millions of people. This reform was passed by the state legislature and is currently being implemented. However, some people are not happy with the change and are complaining about it. As State Senator Lancaster explained:

She has been getting an incredible beating about everything to do with the [reform]...She is getting beat up to such an extent that it is sexist. I am absolutely convinced that if she were a guy she would not be getting the degree of criticism that she is getting...I think she is an incredibly strong woman and you can disagree about what proportion of funds should be invested in this and that, and all that stuff. But she is just being vilified by one segment of the population and it is all political. And I do think that it is so over the top that there is a gender bias.

Throughout the interviews, all of the participants shared many similar examples that they have faced or have seen other female politicians face. It is indeed an uphill battle for women, not just to win the election, but once in office, to be able to do the job.

Dealing with the Old Boys' Network

Participants talked about the existence of the “old boys’ network.” The urban dictionary (2013) describes the old boys’ network as an informal system through which white men establish business relationships in places such as golf courses, exclusive country clubs, sky-boxes at sporting events, or through fraternities. Women and minorities are typically excluded from such places, thereby limiting their access to opportunities for building power-based networks and making important contacts. Of the participants, Governor Burns was the most vocal and forthcoming on the issue. For example, she explained that women often do not have a contact list that is “deep enough” to raise the kind of money that is required for today’s costly political campaigns. Although this may in part stem from limited experience working in traditional business environments, she believes that female politicians just do not have access to the same networking avenues as their male counterparts.

Quite frankly, a lot of the decisions and a lot of the relationships are still made in venues that are predominantly male – the golf course, the football game, the pick up basketball game after work. All of those venues are detrimental to women trying to establish relationships.

Governor Burns went on to talk about the fact that women have a harder time raising money because they are typically more reluctant to brag about themselves and their accomplishments to donors. She adds that, in politics, a candidate has to be bold, talk to strangers, and strongly believe in herself to win the election. In her opinion, many women lack such traits.

You cannot worry about losing. You just have to believe you are going to win. That is the defining characteristic of who can raise money. They know they can win and they can articulate why without disparaging their opponent. And women are reluctant to brag on themselves...For many women it is hard to be proud of their accomplishments and be bold and ask for the raise or ask for the contribution.

According to participants, this critical difference has a negative impact on women's ability to raise money and ultimately to win elections. Yet the old boys' network may also impact women's ability simply to run for office. State Senator Lancaster gave an example of how three Hispanic candidates were thinking about running for a mayoral post of a large town in a northeastern state.

There was a Hispanic woman thinking of running for mayor and at that point there were two male Hispanics who were also thinking of running. And everyone just assumed that one would wind up running and she would automatically support the one that ran. And it was mostly the two guys got together and talked and at some point made a decision as to which one of them would run and she was irrelevant to this whole thing. Which really annoyed her. Understandably.

The old boys' network infiltrates politics at all levels and threatens to impede the success of a female politician trying to run for office. However, as the next theme describes, the problem is more insidious than simply making fundraising more difficult, in that it can also impact her ability to do her job once elected.

The Restroom Issue

Believe it or not, many of the female politicians brought up the issue of restroom access. Whether in the state Senate or the U.S. Congress, over the years women have had fewer options than their male counterparts. For instance, State Senator Lancaster described how she and a female colleague in the state Senate were forced to "liberate"

the men's bathroom so that they would not miss out on business being conducted on the Senate floor.

When I was in the Senate a close friend was elected the same year. We liberated the nearest bathroom, which was a men's-only bathroom by starting to use it. Now it has all changed. But we had to do that. The women's bathroom was a good distance away relative to being on the Senate floor. Men could pop across the hall immediately, you know, use the bathroom and get back on the floor and do it in 30 to 60 seconds. Women would miss business on the floor because of the distance. It is hard to imagine that now. We did it with a sense of humor, but we did it.

Such issues may be hard to imagine in a state Senate today, but the restroom issue recently emerged as a concern in the U.S. Congress. Female politicians in the House of Representatives got their own restroom in 2011 with "four seats. And two sinks" (McKeon, 2011). The newspaper and social media announced it with a great deal of fanfare. Indeed, delegate Donna Christensen from the Virgin Islands marked the occasion by tweeting, "The first woman came to Congress in 1917. We are finally getting a ladies restroom near the floor of the House" (McKeon, 2011). Previously, female representatives would have "had to trek out of chambers and buck the tourists in Statuary Hall to get to what is now called the Lindy Claiborne Boggs Congressional Reading Room for relief" (McKeon, 2011). In one news article, house representative Donna Edwards from Maryland discussed how the new bathroom, located closer to the floor impacted her life. She says, "Before this was here, I would have had to sit [in the chamber] between votes. I didn't have the five minutes to get [to the Reading Room] and then five minutes to get back. I would have missed a vote" (McKeon, 2011).

The situation was similar in the U.S. Senate, where until July 2013, all 20 female senators had to share a two-stall bathroom. As Senator Amy Klobuchar tweeted, she and 19 other women senators “had our first ever in U.S. history traffic jam in the women senator’s restroom” (Klobuchar, 2012). An article in *The New York Times* described how the female senators quickly adapted to the situation: “The senators have learned to use the situation to their advantage: Ms. Stabenow said recently that she and Senator Heidi Heitkamp, a North Dakota Democrat, spent their time in the bathroom line strategizing over how they might get a new farm bill passed” (Steinhauer, 2013). The Senate bathrooms are finally under construction to be expanded, and some women are even hoping they will include a “baby-changing station” (Bahadur, 2013).

It may seem like such a small thing, but Senator Rowland remembered what the lack of restrooms was like during her time in the Senate. She explained, “Right before I got to the Senate, women senators did not even have a bathroom. They had to go downstairs to the public restroom because the restroom that was next to the chamber was for all men.” She adds that things have changed in politics and the restroom issue is indicative of such changes: “It was shifting from the fact that women had not played a role and we continue to transition into the new fact that women are being more and more a part of the process.”

Male dominated restrooms, like the rest of politics, makes the road ahead a long one for women. Indeed, as mundane as the notion of restroom access may be, it is an important element of everyday life for female politicians and one that clearly symbolizes the gendered frame of this everyday. Indeed, it is difficult to separate gender from the

professional identity of these female politicians. That is, for the participants, the reality is that women are “female politicians” while men are simply “politicians.” Moreover, nearly all shared stories of being mistaken for an aide, staff member or secretary, a common experience also seen in memoirs and writings by and about many women politicians, such as the experience of Senator Kelly Ayotte, who came in to work early for her first vote, only to be admonished by the “doorman [who] sternly told her, [the senate desks] were for senators only” (Steinhauer, 2013). As the next section highlights, this gendered everyday becomes even more entrenched though the fascination with appearance, and particularly that of females, that dominates politics today.

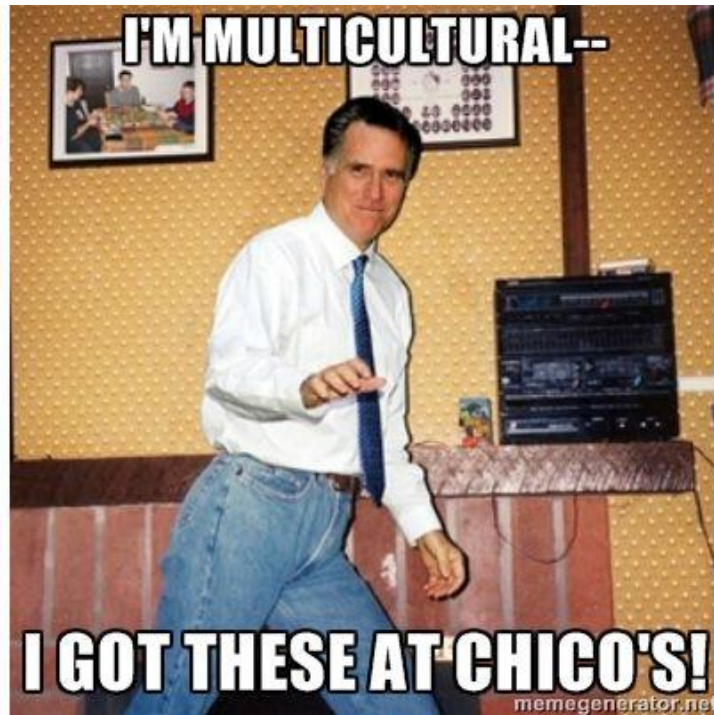
Appearance and Female Politicians: What’s the Big Deal?

As discussed in Chapter I, appearance is often a key focal point when discussing female politicians, especially by the media. This was regularly experienced by all four of the participants, who described how various aspects of their appearance would be discussed and focused upon, not just by the media, but by volunteers and voters as well. The most common issues brought up by participants with respect to appearance include the fact that men have it easier because they have a uniform in the suit. Likewise, men’s hairstyles offer little variation and therefore less room for error. The same holds true for hemlines, which calls forth questions related to hose (to wear it or not to wear it). The one element of appearance that participants saw as actually gender-neutral was weight – in as much as men are equally criticized if they go over acceptable weight limits.

The Male Politician's Uniform

Most participants talked about men's dress as a uniform. That is, as State Senator Lancaster says, "Men have a simple uniform and when they wear it, no one particularly notices." State Senator Lancaster thinks that men face judgment about their appearance only when they break out of this uniform. She provided the example of Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican Presidential Candidate who wore jeans at various campaign rallies and received widespread media coverage on it. Some of the attention was positive, while some was designed to poke fun at the candidate. Specifically Tumblr dedicated a page called "Mitt Romney Wearing Jeans," with a photograph of Romney and his wife visiting with Oprah Winfrey. The picture shows all of them sitting on the couch laughing and the caption reads: "Oh, Oprah! No, I won't tell you my size." A similar example of Romney's jeans wearing as a phenomenon was seen in the "Mom Jeans Mitt" Meme, in which Mitt Romney is featured in the same picture but with different captions such as, "I'm multicultural – I got these at Chico's," (Figure 2).

Figure 2. An Example of ‘Mom Jeans Mitt’ Meme



Reprinted from, Gallery: The best of ‘Mom Jeans Mitt’ meme by J. Deleon in *Complex Style*, Retrieved August 16, 2012, from <http://www.complex.com/style/2012/08/gallery-the-best-of-the-mom-jeans-mitt-meme>.

According to State Senator Lancaster, it is very rare that a male politician’s clothing or appearance is discussed. As she explained, “You rarely get someone saying to the guy, ‘You should wear brown shoes, you should not wear black shoes, you shouldn’t wear khakis.’ [Laughs] I mean, you don’t get that as much with guys.” It is interesting to note that the mere suggestion was humorous to State Senator Lancaster, indicating the extent to which even participants thought that the idea was ridiculous.

Although male politicians may have standardized wardrobe choices with few options, in contrast, female politicians have an extensive range of dress and appearance

decisions that they must be mindful of. This means there is much greater room for error regarding women's appearance, making it doubly difficult for them to avoid criticism, as their appearance is usually a focal point to begin with. Participants pointed in particular to decisions about how to wear their hair, whether to be formal or casual, and what hem length is most appropriate.

Hem Lengths, Hairdos and Husbands

While what male politicians are expected to wear is pretty straightforward, female politicians must effectively manage several components of appearance. As Governor Burns points out, "a man can put on a pair of khakis and a blue blazer and go anywhere in the world," but it is harder for female politicians because there are so many more choices. Senator Rowland talked in detail about the various options women have, and therefore how much thought must go into how the female politician should dress to "look the part."

I do think women try to judge their audiences more in terms of how they are going to appear. Men just have a standard look. When you go to an event and there is a dress code, men wear coat and tie. Coat and tie is coat and tie. It is coat and tie, a suit or a tux. With women it is like, are trousers acceptable, or is it black tie, does it have to be an evening gown, does it have to be a cocktail dress? If it is business attire, does it mean a suit for a woman or can it be a dress? I think that dress codes are a little bit less easy for a woman to decipher. So women have to be more...they do have to survey their audience a little bit and figure out what is going to make them look the part of a senator or a member of congress.

Several participants mentioned that it is much easier for a male politician to look formal in one setting and casual in another. For example, both Senator Rowland and Governor Burns agreed that it is easy for male politicians to have a suit and tie in a formal setting and then remove the coat and roll up the sleeves to look casual in a more

informal setting. In contrast, it is much harder for women to do the same. They think that there are multiple dress choices, including casual, formal, or business casual, thereby making it more difficult than men, who can remove the suit jacket and mingle at a barbeque after having just finished a formal meeting. Female politicians have to think strategically about appearance and manage the variables for different events at different times of the day. As Governor Burns puts it, “there are three things that matter in politics for a woman – hem lengths, hairdos and husbands.” That is, a woman can wear long or short hemlines and in either case her appearance would become the main topic of discussion. She says she was criticized for wearing long skirts and adds, “Men don’t have these issues.” Mayor Mitchell, on the other hand, talks about how she worries about her skirt length being too short, “I am very careful that I don’t wear skirts or dresses that are too short or too low. I don’t want to be out there as a fashion plate. I think I’m careful about what I buy.” In both cases, participants were annoyed that they even had to worry about such issues.

Sometimes the attention can come from other female politicians. For example, in the 2010 Senate election race in California, Republican challenger Carly Fiorina mocked incumbent Democratic Senator Barbara Boxer’s hair on an early morning talk show calling the style “so yesterday” (Henneberger, 2010). After the comment attracted media attention, journalists and television hosts called the behavior “catty,” to which Fiorina responded, “My hair's been talked about by a million people, you know? It sort of goes with the territory” (Henneberger, 2010).

Mayor Mitchell feels frustrated that female politicians get so much media coverage about their appearance, believing it to be undignified and that female politicians deserve better. For Governor Burns, coverage of females in politics is not about content or substance, but rather more superficial things. As Mayor Mitchell points out, the irony is that appearance “is really important. It is superficial and [yet] very important.” State Senator Lancaster thinks that because there are so many variables involved in a female politician’s appearance, as well as a greater degree of scrutiny, that “by and large women are much more analyzed on their physical appearance than men are.” For example she said that even though she dressed professionally, people would often comment on her appearance. “I would wear red and people would say, ‘Oh you look fabulous, you should wear it all the time’ and other people would say, ‘You should never wear red.’” She says such comments are made to female politicians but not males. As State Senator Lancaster put it, “it is the exception with men and with women it is the rule.”

Another issue that is frequently discussed, according to Governor Burns, is the role of husbands. In an article on political husbands, writer McElwaine explained why husbands of female politicians tend to be scrutinized by the media:

It's one of the trickiest jobs in American politics: the male spouse. And with a record number of female candidates running this fall, more husbands are navigating this treacherous territory. For a male political spouse, campaigning is a delicate balancing act: You must appear supportive—without seeming wimpy. (Alaska's First Dude Todd Palin took care of the kids, but showcased his masculine credentials with late night snowmobile rides.) You must stand by your wife's side—but not overshadow. (Note to Bill: sometimes less is more.)

The article mentions the Denis Thatcher Society formed by Jim Schroeder, the husband of the female presidential candidate Patricia Schroeder, as a support group for political husbands who find it difficult to adjust to the role (McElwaine, 2010). According to McElwaine (2010), the society also included husbands of Supreme Court judges Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. A required accessory of sorts, the husband is something expected of all female politicians, and much like the right hairstyle or hemline, his role must keep up with the times.

Politics Versus Society

When discussing appearance with Senator Rowland, the issue of pantyhose arose. She talked about how while she was running for office she attended a seminar conducted by the National Women's Political Caucus on how to win an election. In the seminar, female candidates were advised to carry an extra pair of pantyhose at all times. Senator Rowland explains in greater detail as to why the Caucus made the suggestion:

Because if you are in a debate or you are out, if people notice a run in your hose, it is a whole different ball game. In terms of your appearance, it was a whole different challenge, because people won't pay attention to what you are saying, because they can't think beyond the fact that you have a run in your hose.

Clearly, the pantyhose issue is a problem unique to females, in as much as men do not wear them. Female politicians also need to consider regional differences in appearance expectations. That is, apparel choices that may be acceptable for a female politician in one state may not work in another. If some states expect her to wear pantyhose and some do not, how does she please all audiences in a nationwide televised debate? Like restrooms, pantyhose may seem like a rather minor issue, but one that a female politician

running in a presidential race might have to consider, while her male counterpart would not. Because they more or less wear a uniform, males are exempt from considerations of such details that can take time and energy away from the issues at hand.

Another appearance-related issue, albeit one that has changed in recent years, is hats. Hats may not be as popular anymore or much of an issue in the lives of most female politicians today, but when Hattie Carraway, the first female politician elected to serve a full term as a senator came to the Senate in 1932, she was not allowed to wear hats on the floor. According to Senator Rowland, this was a big problem for her:

The first woman to be elected to the Senate in her own right was Hattie Caraway in 1932. Talk about scrutiny. She had lost her husband, so she had completed the final two years of his term and then chose to run for election, which shocked everybody. But she was still in mourning so she wore black. Back in the day it was considered inappropriate for a woman to be out in public without a hat, but it is against Senate rules to wear a hat on the floor of the Senate because it was rude if a man wore a hat indoors. But for a woman it was really more of an issue of whether she was being appropriate or not. There has always been this kind of scrutiny, as woman became a greater part of the political atmosphere. [Another congresswoman Bella Abzug] from New York...was very flamboyant and she wore hats and she was definitely incensed that she was not allowed to wear hats on the floor. But that was the rule. You don't change the rules of the House or the Senate easily. [Laughs.]

This excerpt, rich in history, is a clear reminder of how appearance rules have changed over the years. A mixed blessing, participants' responses highlight the extent to which having choices is not always a good thing, especially when female politicians are being scrutinized for either following or not following social norms. However, for participants, one appearance-related issue that seems to transcend gender in politics is weight.

Weight: An Equal Opportunity Offender

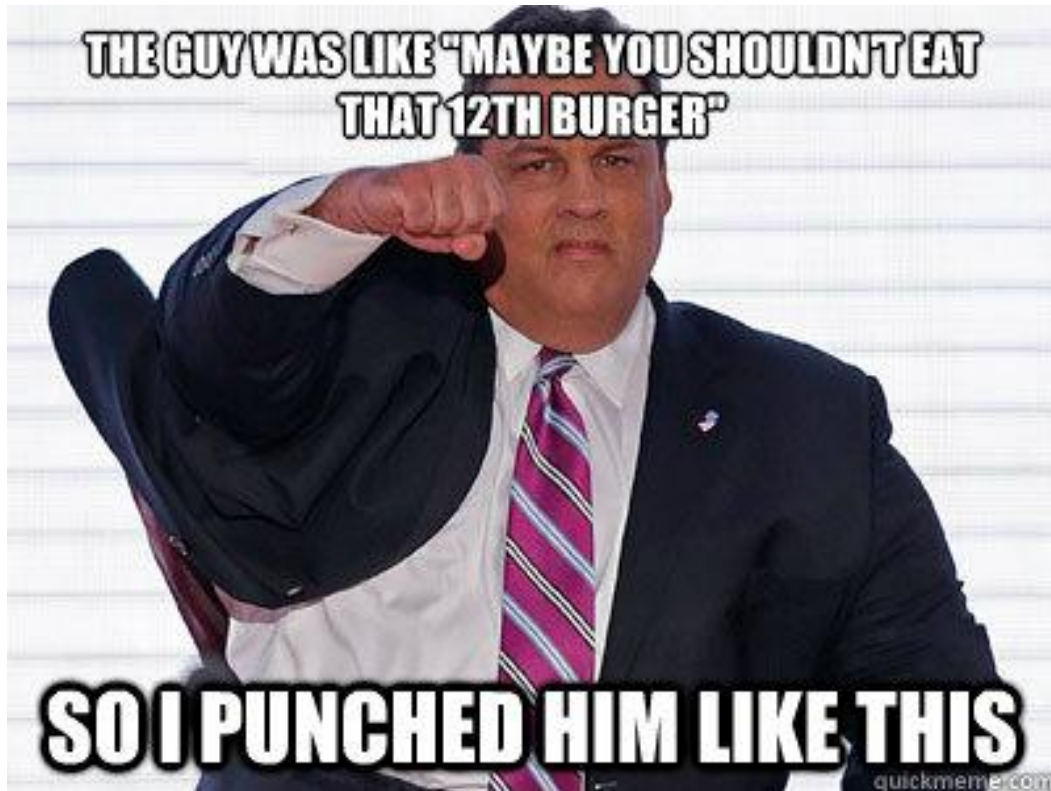
Many participants discussed the issue of weight in politics. When asked if she thinks that weight matters, Mayor Mitchell responded: “Unfortunately I do, and it has been a lifelong struggle for me. I was thin for about 15 minutes my whole life, it came and went. I do think it makes a difference.” However, based on the media’s coverage of New Jersey’s Governor Chris Christie, weight is not an issue that affects female politicians alone. Governor Christie weighed over 350 pounds before his lap-band surgery in June 2013, amidst speculation that he was doing it to bolster his chances for a 2016 presidential run. To that end, a recent *Time* magazine cover included a picture of Chris Christie’s close up while subtly highlighting his mouth with the caption, “The elephant in the room,” suggesting that Governor Christie needed to talk about his weight issues.

Like Mitt Romney’s “Mom Jeans,” Governor Christie’s weight has been the target of social media sites, including a Tumblr account dedicated to his weight loss called “Chris Christie Eats,” as well as several memes that ridicule his eating habits (see Figure 3). Such social media outputs are indicative of the critical humor that surrounds Chris Christie’s weight issue. Indeed, even Governor Burns talked about Christie’s food habits and the interpretation of them by the public as well as the media:

I know [Chris Christie]...he would come into a meeting and eat like a pig. We all laughed at him because he enjoyed food. It was a pleasure for him and I believe he realized that the questions were on the wall. I read it, and he read it. People would say – ‘You have no self control, you’re not a self regulator.’ That is, I would imagine, one of the reasons he chose to have surgery and is gradually losing weight and he looks healthy. I think the world is so superficial in terms of the first 60 seconds that the same standard holds for men and women. I think age

will be more of a barrier than weight for women. People will expect candidates to be healthy and vigorous. And if you're not, you better figure out a plan to make yourself.

Figure 3. Chris Christie Meme



Reprinted from, Chris Christie Memes in *Quickmeme*, Retrieved September 17, 2013, from <http://www.quickmeme.com/meme/3qowz2>

As Governor Burns explains, weight seems to be an issue regardless of gender. Senator Lancaster also cited Chris Christie's weight as an issue that highlights the attention paid to a politician's size, whether male or female. Mayor Mitchell concurs, but thinks that it is a bigger issue for women, or that it may simply be easier for men to hide

their weight issues behind a suit, while women's clothing choices make it harder to do so.

She explained:

Chris Christie got pretty beat up about his weight and surgery and the late night people really went after him, and they did with Huckabee when he was heavy. So maybe it is an equal opportunity offender, I'm not sure, but I think women get it a little bit more. Like when Hillary gains a few pounds it becomes a headline, oh Bill did too, his weight fluctuating. I think when men wear their suits; they can hide their weight better. Women's clothing does not necessarily give you that same camouflage.

Mayor Mitchell talked about how the weight conversation even impacts her own household. Her husband is also a politician and both have to keep their appearances up for the public. However, when she gains weight, her husband, who is unquestionably overweight, prods her to lose weight, often leading to an argument between the two. The following excerpt from Mitchell's interview offers an interesting perspective on the issue, not just between two politicians, but also between a husband and wife:

My husband and I have had this argument because he and I both have an unhealthy relationship with food. And he'll say to me, like some husbands do, 'Maybe you should take off a few.' And I say 'Look in the mirror.' And he says 'It is okay for the man, the woman has to look better than the man.' I thought 'Well that's really interesting!'

For the participants in this study, appearance-related expectations, from pantyhose to hemlines to hats, are an integral part of the gendered nature of their identities as female politicians. For the most part, such expectations are not scrutinized to the same extent or given the same degree of attention when it comes to male politicians. In the rare instances when they are, it usually takes the form of humor or "making fun." However, for the

female politician, such expectations can make or break a political career, therefore they cannot be separated from an understanding of her lived experience and what it means to be a female in politics.

Being a Female Politician

Politicians, whether male or female, face constant scrutiny, especially in the world of 24 hour news channels, smart-phones and social media. However, the life of a female politician is scrutinized more often and in different ways than that of a male politician. According to participants, the female politician must walk a fine line between being too feminine and not feminine enough, and between being a female politician and being treated like one.

Sophisticated, Not Sexy

Appearance includes not just the form, such as clothing or make-up, but also the meanings of these forms, such as femininity, attractiveness, and respectability. According to State Senator Lancaster, women are constantly being judged on whether they “look the part” and “whether the object fits the box (the office).” In her opinion, “women have a higher bar to overcome,” in that men do not have to adhere to the same level of standards. Other participants echo these sentiments, believing there to be a double standard that the female politician must either overcome or learn to live with.

For example, during the campaign for mayor, Mitchell was often told that she looked like Sarah Palin, and did not know whether she should consider it to be a compliment or not. She thinks Sarah Palin is an attractive woman and she definitely wanted to appear attractive. However, she also felt that Sarah Palin’s reputation was that

of a “ditz,” and this worried her. As Mayor Mitchell put it, “I certainly don’t want to be out there as the sexy candidate. That is not what I am looking to do. Because I think people need to take you seriously.” Indeed, Mayor Mitchell’s age and appearance prompted some unwanted attention during the campaign, in that she learned that she was being labeled a MILF. MILF is a pop culture acronym for ‘Mother I’d like to f***.’ This term became trendy after being used in such movies as *American Pie* and it is now a part of teenage lexicon to describe attractive mothers. But in the case of Mayor Mitchell, the word *Mother* was replaced with *Mayor*. She said, “A friend told me a friend of his said I was a MILF, but it was Mayor I’d like to [...]. Would somebody say that about [my opponent], handsome as he is? I just don’t think that.” Indeed, it was obvious that this statement upset Mayor Mitchell, as she did not want to be “objectified” in this manner, but would instead prefer to be known as the “sophisticated” candidate. In other words, the candidate who appears attractive, but not sexy.

Such experiences are not unique to Mayor Mitchell. Governor Burns described a campaign pit stop in a rural area of the state. Stopping at a “country store,” the men were stunned at the sight of a female politician. She described meeting an older man in “bib overalls” who told her that he could not vote for her because, in his opinion, women did not belong in office. According to Governor Burns, he then said, “When you lose, you can come back up here and be my third wife.” Likewise, Senator Rowland believes that expectations of appearance “are different and the judgment perhaps can be different.” In the long run, Senator Rowland agrees that “people are more prone to criticize women.” She explains:

It is one of those unheard impressions that are made. As you meet with voters, obviously your appearance says a lot about you. I think your level of competence, your level of professional attitude and things like that...It probably is subconscious as anything and it is internalized by constituencies, without a doubt.

Although female politicians are often wary of remarks about their appearance, not all of the participant's stories were negative. Senator Rowland met a man while on the campaign trail who seemed to be scrutinizing her "in many ways, not just my appearance but questioning me on issues, what have you." She later found out that he had three daughters and wanted to make sure that the female politician he voted for would "fight for them to be able to be as successful in the workplace as the men they work with."

For State Senator Lancaster, appearance is a key part of the "unspoken judgments" voters make about competence, effectiveness, and likeability of the candidate. Governor Burns pointed to the kind of impressions mentioned by Senator Rowland, saying that people often make judgments about a politician within the first few minutes. She points out that such evaluations are based on standards for women in society:

It is societal. It is how you evaluate people initially. Especially the first 30 second look. People make up their mind about you in the first 30 to 45 seconds of the beginning of a meeting. In a politically competitive race it becomes even more intense and they judge by those superficial things, and sometimes I believe they will never get over that...Part of the reason it was hard for me was because I was a woman.

Moreover, as State Senator Lancaster explains, it "comes from historical and cultural attitudes about gender," specifically that the media has an easier time discussing women's appearance than men's and that, most importantly, the public is "used to that

kind of discussion about women.” Mayor Mitchell concurs, and points out, “You would never talk about a man’s cankles or his suits. It is really demeaning to be reduced to your appearance.” It is no surprise then, that each of the female politicians talked about the desire to be treated like a man.

Being Treated Like a Man

In the interviews, the topic of Hillary Clinton’s failed attempt at securing the Democratic Party presidential nomination in 2008 surfaced frequently. Amid speculation of Hillary Clinton’s 2016 run, Mayor Mitchell wondered about whether the press will “treat her like a man.” When asked to explain what she meant, she responded, “I don’t think there has ever been a woman as qualified as her. I hope they would...treat her like a man. Not focusing on [the fact that] she gained 10 pounds or her haircut. It is so demeaning.” To Mayor Mitchell, being treated like a man in the field of politics is to be treated in such a way that one’s appearance is the not at the fore, or to be judged, scrutinized and dissected in great detail, often to the detriment of one’s career. To put it another way, it is very unlikely that any male politician would wish to be treated like a woman.

In a similar vein, State Senator Joy Lancaster pointed out that the male speaker of the House, John Boehner, has a well-known tendency to cry. She says:

If Nancy Pelosi cries like John Boehner does, she would have been booted out of the House? She would not be the Democratic leader. We don’t have tolerance for women crying. Men crying are sensitive, women crying are whiners.

Several others remarked on the different expectations placed on female politicians vis-à-vis male politicians. For example, if a male politician is tough, it is a sign of strength. However, according to State Senator Lancaster, “a tough woman is seen as a bitch [rather] than a tough man...I think we are much more accepting of strong men than we are of strong women.” Governor Burns also suggested these “language differentials” and thinks that members of the media often deliberately use “adjectives and adverbs [that] are less friendly to women than they are to men.”

Mayor Mitchell referenced another 2008 election, a campaign for the Senate between two female politicians, Elizabeth ‘Liddy’ Dole and Kay Hagan,

I remember reading a story about Kay Hagen and Elizabeth Dole and the first two paragraphs were dedicated to what they were wearing. If two men were debating, they wouldn’t be talking about their ties, shoes, and things like that. It really is a shame that women are still reduced to articles of clothing.

According to Mayor Mitchell, focusing on appearance in this way is designed to marginalize female politicians who are making in-roads in the power structures of the political arena. As she explains, “This is a way of marginalizing women because I think men are threatened that women are making some inroads in higher offices...and it is just a way of keeping things different.”

The notion of being threatening is an important one for female politicians, who are usually advised to appear as “non-threatening” as possible in order to appeal to voters. For example, when Mitchell announced that she was running for Mayor, she received a lot of advice on how to appeal to women voters in particular. Specifically, it was suggested that she seek to make women her age see her as a friend, and older women

see her as a daughter “which is something they can all relate to and that is non-threatening.” Although she definitely wanted to appeal to the women voters, she nevertheless found it interesting that it was important for her to appear “non-threatening.” It would be unlikely for men to be told they should appear non-threatening to their constituents or members of media. This is a particular dynamic unique to the lived experience of the female politician, and one that is expressed through appearance and its many factors.

A Box to Stand On

When women politicians run for office, they often have to deal with expectations of looking the part. While a woman may look professional, her physical characteristics make a difference in the minds of voters. In settings where the female and male candidate are seen together, physical differences between them can set them apart. As Governor Burns found, one such difference is height:

In my experience, because I am short, the issue becomes even more pronounced in any kind of visual setting where the man and the woman...political candidate[s] appear on the same platform because of the physical stature difference and I think that becomes subliminal. I have always thought that. I became so aggressive that I would demand a box to stand on to make me equivalent...But you still have to walk in on the stage with him and you still have that first photograph taken of you two shaking hands where he is looking down at you and that is important.

Although male candidates of short stature may experience something similar, it is more frequently an issue for female politicians. Women are usually shorter than men and this marked physical difference impacts their ability to “look like a leader,” in as much as height is equated with power. When I asked Governor Burns if this affects voter

perceptions of female politicians, she responded that it does, and that in addition to creating a distinction between the two candidate's physical abilities, she believes it also impacts interpretations of mental prowess. That is, it is a popular notion that the taller candidate is the one more likely to win the U.S. presidential election (Page, 2004). Being short puts the female candidate at a disadvantage if voters are making competency judgments based on physical characteristics. An interesting double standard arises here, when comparing this theme to previous points of being non-threatening. Being tall does not make the male candidate threatening. Instead, it makes it more likely that he will win. Yet, being short should make the female less threatening, a factor that also seems to be very important. Thus, it is a no-win situation, as articulated by Governor Burns.

I do [think it impacts voters]. Beyond that, it is easier to reinforce your feelings about their ability. You've begun to feel something perhaps that you don't even acknowledge. You may not actually subsequently know you feel that way. That happens to you. And I have always believed that once you begin to feel that way about the physical presence, or you begin to discriminate subliminally, that the first time the candidate does or the business leader something you find inappropriate such as Hillary becoming harsh or Sarah Palin appearing ill-informed, they stuck. And there was no climbing out of the hole. That's what so sad.

For Governor Burns, appearance impacts ideas of identity and competence even if voters do not realize it.

Throughout this chapter, the themes that emerged from the interviews with the female politicians covered a myriad of situations and circumstances, providing deep insight into their lived experiences and helping to address the question, *what is it like to be a female politician?* Their experiences help to elucidate the challenges they face as a

result of their gendered identities and appearance expectations, as well as the impact of both on their successes in the political arena. For the four female politicians in this study, gender identity is inextricably linked to everyday life, whether it is building credibility among constituents, fighting for access to restrooms, or dealing with the old boys' network. Each discussed how various aspects of her appearance, whether it is hemlines, hose, hats, or hair, are used to shape what it means to be a female politician. Finally, participant responses highlight how appearance is integral to understanding the experience of the female politician. In the next chapter, I consider what appearance means in the context of political marketing.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the first “layer” of thematic interpretation emerging from the data, specifically exploring what it is like to be a female politician and the role of appearance within this experience. In the next chapter, I provide the second layer of thematic interpretation in order to examine what appearance and gender mean for the marketing of a female politician.

CHAPTER V

THEMATIC INTERPRETATION PART II: MARKETING THE FEMALE POLITICIAN

In this chapter, themes that emerged from the data collected during interviews with participants included in the second and third rings of sample are explored. In particular, staff, aides, and political consultants comprise the second ring, and members of PACs, the media, and volunteers comprise the third. As with Chapter IV, data collected from the interviews are augmented by discussion of newspaper and magazine articles, books, and social media sites as referenced by participants.

As the second “layer” of thematic interpretation, this chapter is divided into four sections. I begin with a description of the different participants included in the sample groups. I then organize the themes that emerged from the interviews with these participants into three sections: *Messaging Gender*, *Meanings of Appearance*, and *Marketing a Female Politician in a Man’s World*.

Description of Participants

Interviews were conducted with a total of seventeen participants who are either in supporting roles or are affiliated with the media. Typically, careers in politics do not follow a linear trajectory, and this holds true for a variety of people in politics, not just politicians. For example, many staff members and aides eventually run for office. Likewise, many volunteers become paid staff members or aides.

Staff members and aides are terms often used interchangeably in politics. According to C-SPAN (2000) a *staffer* is a paid position allotted to a member of Congress by the government. House members are allowed 18 full-time and 4 part-time staff members, while Senators have no limit on the number of staff they can hire. *Aide* is a term that may be used for a member of staff or someone who may work with a politician on a campaign. Sometimes an aide is someone who works for a particular politician but who is paid by another organization or a political action committee. A *staffer* works with the politician in her office, whether she is in Washington, DC or her home state.

Once out of office, many politicians join political action committees, become media personalities, or become political consultants. Such job paths can be seen in a variety of permutations and combinations within the world of politics. That said, many of the participants in this study have been involved in several different facets of political life and have served in a variety of roles over the years (see Table 4). In the following paragraphs, I briefly describe the background of the seventeen participants involved in supporting the success of the female politician. As with the previous chapter, pseudonyms are used in place of real names.

Table 4. Participant Data

Name	Political Experience
Anna Belle Crawford	Former senior White House official. Author, co-host for a television news program, and political consultant
James Pippen	Congressional Staffer for a Senator, aide, and PAC member
Nicole Christensen	National Woman's Voters Director for presidential campaign, PAC member, aide and political consultant
Andrea Fearrington	Lobbyist, political consultant, aide and politician
John Duckworth	Political consultant, aide and politician
Oliver Andrews	Political consultant
Jacob Ratner	Political consultant
Adriana Kablitz	Political consultant, voice coach and media trainer
Samantha Wilkes	Staff member, PAC member, and political consultant
Alexandra Margozzini	Political Director at PAC
Kevin Dixon	Political Director at Super PAC, intern for Congressman
Lucy Little	Field Director at Super PAC, delegate in 2008 elections and district representative for a Congresswoman
Kate Renou	Political Director at non-partisan PAC, and Political Director at Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.
Michael Armstrong	Author, Opinion-Editor, Journalist
David Spurlock	Editor, Journalist
Kathy Edwards	Volunteer, County office manager
Joseph Puccio	Volunteer, Senior party official

Of the seventeen participants, nine comprise the second ring of the sample. This group includes Anna Belle Crawford, who is a former senior White House official appointed by the President and served for two years. Notably, she was the first woman to be appointed to the position. Crawford is also an author and co-hosts a television news program. She is currently a political consultant and works in Washington, DC. Participant James Pippen has served several state senators, worked for a political action committee, and is currently a senior congressional staffer for a senator. Participant Nicole Christensen is a political consultant living in the Midwest. She has served as the National Woman's Voter Director for a presidential campaign, worked with numerous PACs focusing on female politicians, and has been an aide to several female politicians during their campaigns. Participant Andrea Fearrington is a principal at a Washington, DC-based political group involved in policy development, lobbying, campaigning, political counsel, and strategic communications. Fearrington has run for city council, served as an aide to a female senator in 2012 and has worked with several female politicians as a political consultant.

Participant John Duckworth currently serves in office as a county official in a Midwestern state, but is also a political consultant on the side. He has volunteered in presidential campaigns as well as interned with a Congressman. Participants Oliver Andrews and Jacob Ratner both own their own firms and work on different aspects of political campaigns for the two main political parties. Andrews, a Republican, has worked on voter contact campaigns for three presidential campaigns as well as several campaigns for senators, representatives, and governors. Ratner, a Democrat, operates a

full-service political consulting firm that handles political campaigns, advocacy issues and independent expenditures for presidential as well as congressional and state campaigns.

Participants Adriana Kablitz and Samantha Wilkes are two entrepreneurs who own their own political marketing firms and work on diverse aspects of campaigns. Kablitz started her career in the media and currently serves as a voice coach and media trainer for several politicians, helping to develop their political communication abilities and speech writing, along with debate preparation and media strategy. Wilkes worked as a staff member on Capitol Hill and in a PAC focused on female politicians before starting her own organization focusing on various aspects of web, television, radio, and other media for political campaigns.

Participants comprising the third ring of the sample are primarily members of Political Action Committees (PACs), the media, or work as volunteers. Participants Alexandra Margozzini, Lucy Little, Kevin Dixon and Kate Renou are all members of PACs. Participants Michael Armstrong and David Spurlock are members of the media, while participants Kathy Edwards and Joseph Puccio are volunteers serving the Democratic and Republican parties, respectively.

Margozzini got involved in politics during school, when she was nominated to attend American Legion Girls State, which promotes responsible citizenship among school children. She worked on her first campaign right after college and “got addicted” to the process. She is currently the political director of an important PAC that focuses on female candidates.

Lucy Little and Kevin Dixon are both employed at a non-partisan PAC in Washington, DC that focuses on issues of equality by funding pro-gay rights candidates in the House of Representatives and Senate. Little, a regional field director for the southern region, has a PhD in English and taught film, literature, and LGBT studies at a university prior to joining the PAC. She has served as a district representative for a congresswoman as well as a field director for a congressional campaign. Kevin Dixon is the political director for one of the largest PACs in the United States, also known as a super-PAC. As the director, Mr. Dixon oversees a range of activities such as endorsements, campaign-giving, as well as analyzing candidate viability. Before joining this super-PAC, Dixon volunteered for a congresswoman and interned for a congressman in Washington, DC. Kate Renou is the political director for a non-partisan PAC based in Washington, DC. She has also worked as a regional political director for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, where she helped many candidates get elected to office and worked on legislative, congressional, mayoral, senate, and presidential races.

As members of the media, participant Michael Armstrong is a well-known journalist who authored a book on a presidential election and writes an opinion column in a leading left-leaning U.S. newspaper. Participant David Spurlock is the editor of a right-leaning newspaper in a Southern state and in which he has reported on political races, news and local political happenings over the past 21 years.

Participant Kathy Edwards got interested in politics as a child when her godfather ran for County Commissioner. In college, Edwards pursued this interest through a degree in journalism and a double minor in history and political science. She has volunteered for

several campaigns and now works as a full-time volunteer and county office manager for the Democratic Party in a Southern state. Participant Joseph Puccio's interest in politics was triggered during his term as a member of the Chamber of Commerce in a Southern state. When he moved to a different state, his contacts referred him to the local Republican Party office where he has since volunteered as a senior party official and helped with several local political campaigns.

Because each of these participants has served in a variety of political capacities, each has in-depth knowledge of how politics works at the local, state and national level, and therefore each offers insights into the topic based on their own experiences. In the following interpretation, similarities and differences in their perspectives are discussed and interpreted as a means to understand the role of gender and appearance in the marketing of a female politician.

Messaging Gender

According to participants, appearance management is a critical aspect of political marketing, regardless of whether the candidate is male or female. However, participants suggest that it is especially important for female politicians. In this section, I explore themes that emerged from the data that reveal the link between appearance and political marketing, particularly the role of gender within this link. The parallels between attaining office and getting a job are explained, specifically in terms of marketing a good impression as a means of "winning" the campaign. The extent to which the rules of this

process do not apply similarly to males is then explored. That is, participants pointed to a different set of standards applied to the appearance of females during a campaign as compared to that of males.

Getting the Job

A campaign in today's political climate often lasts months and sometimes even years. Indeed, during my interviews with several participants who are political consultants, members of PACs and the media, it was clear that many are already discussing possible contenders and strategies for the 2016 presidential race. To that end, several of the political consultants I interviewed talked about a campaign as a long, complex process designed to position the candidate for public consumption. Many compared the campaign process to the rigors of a job interview, but one that stretches on for a much longer period of time. For example, Fearington explained:

Campaigning is nothing but a long job interview...and you have to present a certain way. You have to look as if you are credible. And certainly appearance plays a role in that.

When asked what goes into making a politician "look credible," Fearington responded that regardless of gender, a politician needs to look clean, well kept, and professional. She believes that if politicians appear well-kept and professional, then voters will think they are responsible and that they will take care of the "details." That is, they will perform well in the job.

If someone is well-kept and well presented then they will present well on your behalf, represent you well. And they are probably responsible if they take the time

to take care of themselves and present themselves in a positive way physically. If people take care of the details then they will take better care of you.

Christensen, a political consultant, also used the long interview analogy when we discussed campaigning. According to her, voters are often “interviewing a candidate for a job.” Thus, much like in a job interview, a candidate must present him/herself seriously in order to be taken seriously for the position. She adds, “When you campaign for a job it *does* matter how you dress or how you present yourself” as voters expect that a representative will look the part. Similarly, Spurlock stated that politicians dress up because they want people to believe they are taking their jobs seriously: “They want people to think they are serious about their jobs, they take it seriously and they are trying to do a good job.” Renou concurs, explaining that a well-groomed, attractive, fit appearance reflects discipline, as well as commitment to the job and the people that the candidate represents. She explained:

If you don’t care about your appearance, what is to say you care about going to work everyday and being a good representative and taking care of the people. People in America just expect to see that kind of presentation and stature from their elected officials.

However, participants pointed to the idea that expectations of appearance are not always applied to same extent for all “applicants.” Indeed, all participants believed that female politicians face not just an increased level of scrutiny regarding appearance, but a different kind of scrutiny than that of their male counterparts. For instance, Margozzini explained that female politicians have a tougher time during a campaign, in as much as they are examined more closely than male politicians, stating that, “everything is just a

little tougher for women candidates...women, regardless of their qualifications, are judged more than men are.” Likewise, Crawford explained, “There is no question that women are judged much more frequently, and often much more harshly, on their appearance than men.” Farrington further elaborated on this idea:

The types of criticisms that women get for their clothes are different than the types of criticisms men get for their clothes. The woman [candidate] has to be really careful about what she wears, how she wears it and at what time of day... There is a lot of attention paid to a woman’s appearance, her hair, her make-up, and her jewelry. All that is scrutinized in a way that is very different from men.

For female political candidates, it is more than just what one wears, but how one wears it. As Renou stated, “Even though appearances are important on both sides, women do have it a lot harder to get over that barrier.” She believes it is largely because of what the American public expects female leaders to look like: “They expect you to fit into a certain box with straight hair and very nice nails and all those things.”

As aides, strategists, and media professionals, participants emphasized how appearance has become even more highlighted in the age of smart phones and social media. That is, politicians need to be aware that they can be photographed or videotaped anywhere and at any point in time, and that these photos and videos can “go viral” within minutes. Thus, participants who are political consultants talked about how they are increasingly having to emphasize the importance of appearance to their clients/candidates at all times. As Kablitz stated:

Most of the women who are running are running because they want to be public servants, because they want to serve. Most of them don’t want to focus on

appearance. We have to coax them into thinking of their clothing options and hairstyles. Because most of them don't think about or even care about that stuff on a daily basis. Because they are too busy with their lives. This whole idea of the digital age and that they can be photographed anywhere they campaign and anything can go viral instantly is a whole new thing that they have to wrap their head around. Some are very reluctant to change their hairstyle [or] to spend more money on clothes.

Voters often personally know their local politicians, such as a member of a local planning board or a village alderman, because they meet them in church, at school, at clubs or around town. However, it is not the same when a politician is running for higher office. That is, voters do not typically know the candidates personally, therefore they must make inferences about capabilities based on appearance. Margozzini explains that appearance helps to build a specific image of a person, and voters often use appearance cues to decide whether the politician is someone with whom they can connect. She explains this notion by using the example of Martha Coakely and Scott Brown in the 2010 special election to fill Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy's Senate seat after his death. She explained that Martha Coakely's campaign marketing materials included pictures of her which were most often "behind a desk, with a lot of papers on the desk," while Scott Brown's materials showed him "shaking hands with people wearing his barn jacket and driving a freakin' pick-up." Martha Coakely's materials portrayed her as a "snob" or a "career woman" to blue collar workers, while Brown's conveyed the "fabric of America" feel to voters, leading to what many consider to be a shocking campaign loss by Coakely.

A political consultant's success rests on his or her ability to get the politician elected. In as much as a campaign is a long job interview, this requires the campaign

team pay close and consistent attention to the candidate's appearance to ensure that she is considered "well-suited" for the job. Thus, like it or not, appearance management plays a key role in making the candidate look presentable in order to be viewed as a serious contender for the job. In the case of a female politician, this task is even more critical because of the intense scrutiny she receives during a campaign, including the details of her clothing, hair and nails. This scrutiny not only carries with it judgment about her capability relative to the position, but places a great deal of pressure on those who work with and in support of her during an election campaign to ensure that the wrong messages are not being communicated by her appearance.

The Voice of Authority

Adriana Kablitz is a voice coach and a political and media consultant, hence she advises female candidates on speech writing and delivery as well as media interviews. In her experience, voters focus on three things: the visual, the voice and the verbal. According to Kablitz, the visual is the appearance of the candidate, the voice is the quality and expressiveness of his or her voice, and verbal is the content of the message. Kablitz explained that when people think of someone who is a "voice of authority," most times you will hear names such as "Martin Luther King, Jr., Ronald Reagan or Bill Clinton...rarely does someone mention a woman first," and that when asked to describe what a voice of authority sounds like, most will "describe a typical man's voice. Lower in tone, louder, if you will." As she explained it, "Because there are no women leaders, people are not accustomed to seeing women speakers." This absence also impacts perceptions of the authoritativeness of the female candidate vis-à-vis her male

counterpart. Kablitz gave the example of the voice lessons sought by Margaret Thatcher, as illustrated in the movie *The Iron Lady* (Lloyd, 2011). Political consultants told Margaret Thatcher that to be more credible she should stop wearing hats because they made her appear as though she was a housewife, and to take diction lessons to lower her voice so as not to squeak when she talked. As Kablitz explained, female politician's voices tend to stand out. Thus, women are often criticized as "'shrill' or 'childlike,' because women tend to have a higher pitch to their voice." Christensen agreed and said:

It is an unfair thing about politics but a real thing. Women with high-pitched voices, when they get angry, get screechy. That does not have positive connotations in our society. That is not going to change. So we have to control the way we communicate and deliver our messages so that they can be heard by our voters.

Kablitz works with female politicians to help them learn to pitch their voices lower, in order to sound more authoritative. She also works on other verbal cues, such as "gutter words like 'ummm' and 'you know.'"

The consequences of such cues were seen when Caroline Kennedy showed interest in being appointed by the New York Governor for Hillary Clinton's Senate seat. Kennedy received criticism for her interview on NY1, a 24 hour cable news network in which she said the phrase "you know" over 140 times. This interview received significant coverage in both the national and international press and ruined Kennedy's chances of getting the Senate appointment. As Kablitz explained, "She didn't sound confident. She sounded hesitant. So both of those things really hurt her." According to Kablitz, it is important for a woman to sound confident and

authoritative, as only then will she be considered a credible leader and win the trust and confidence of voters. She explained, “If the voice sounds credible, I think voters become more comfortable.”

A Judgment Call

Participants, on the whole, believe that the female politician’s appearance is judged differently than the male’s. When asked to explain why that was the case, participants cited different reasons. Interestingly, reasons often depended upon the gender of the participant. That is, the female participants seemed to think it stemmed from social inequality rooted in the patriarchal system. In contrast, most male participants thought that the reason why the appearance of female politicians is scrutinized more and to a different degree is because women have a greater variety of clothing and accessories to choose from, hence greater room for error. For example, several male participants remarked that color and style options for men are very limited. Both Duckworth and Pippen think that men have a smaller range of dress options than women. As Pippen said, there are “maybe three colors” (e.g. blue, black, or grey) that male candidates could wear in terms of the suit. Moreover, suits are largely generic and few male politicians are concerned about style trends. Spurlock added:

For male politicians the rules are either coat and tie or button down or open collar or sport coat. You go to an event and a high percentage of men will have khaki pants and a navy blazer during a summer event. It’s kind of a uniform.

In addition, respondents remarked that men’s styles do not change as much as women’s styles do, and that men can “get away with” not being current with fashion. In

contrast, a female politician will be judged if she is wearing something outdated.

Spurlock explained, “I can put on a suit that I bought 20 years ago and no one will say a word. It is pretty much the same. But women...whatever is in style goes in and out.”

Spurlock went on to state that “women have more leeway” and because of this they “also have the ability to get into more trouble than men.” In a similar vein, Duckworth adds, “Women have more style choices and people may infer different things from those different styles.” For example, the idea of transitioning from a formal to casual setting is not the same for male and female politicians. As Dixon explained, it is easy for male politicians to wear a suit and tie in a formal setting and then remove the coat and roll up the sleeves to look appropriate for a more informal setting. It is much harder for women to do the same.

Several female participants concurred that female politicians have various dress choices including casual, formal, or business casual, and more options in terms of clothing styles and accessories. However, their explanations tended to go much deeper into the issues that female politicians face relative to the gendered expectations and judgments of these options. Clearly, the female participants understood the female politician in a more nuanced way, perhaps as a result of the shared experience of being female in American society. As Little said, “Women are judged first and foremost on how they look...I can’t think of the last time I heard a comment about a man’s outfit in politics...however, women are up for grabs – it is open season.”

According to the female participants, all women in American society are judged on their appearance, whether in politics or any other profession. Crawford described the

scope, “No woman in public life escapes it” and offered examples of how famous women are judged whether they are on television, such as Katie Couric and Oprah Winfrey, or are film actors, such as Angelina Jolie, and even senior government officials such as Condoleezza Rice and female politicians such as Hillary Clinton. As she put it, “You can’t think of a woman who is a highly visible public figure whose appearance does not play some role in the way we think about her.” According to Fearington, the greater level of scrutiny placed on female politicians is consistent with how women in American society are scrutinized, explaining that “there is more of a focus on female politicians and what they look like because we focus more on what women look like than what they think as a society, a whole culture.”

For participants, appearance management is a critical issue when marketing female politicians because the slightest error in judgment can turn into a national story and, in turn, a public relations nightmare for the candidate and her team. For example, Christensen believes that her job as a political consultant to female politicians is to make sure that the appearance of the candidate does not distract from the message. She explained that this is difficult to do, and cited the significant press coverage given to Hillary Clinton’s cleavage as a result of her clothing choices during a July 2007 debate. It began when *The Washington Post* writer Robin Givhan (2007) published a 746-word article about Hillary Clinton’s cleavage:

There was cleavage on display Wednesday afternoon on CPSAN2. It belonged to Sen. Hillary Clinton. She was talking on the Senate floor about the burdensome cost of higher education. She was wearing a rose-colored blazer over a black top. The neckline sat low on her chest and had a subtle V-shape. The cleavage

registered after only a quick glance. No scrunch-faced scrutiny was necessary. There wasn't an unseemly amount of cleavage showing, but there it was. Undeniable. (see Figure 5)

Several other newspapers and television shows followed suit, discussing Givhan's article, thereby turning Senator Clinton's cleavage into a national story.

Figure 4. Screen Shot of Hillary Clinton on C-SPAN 2



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According to the female participants, the Clinton cleavage incident is not an isolated one, but reflects the kind of media coverage a female politician typically receives about her appearance. As described earlier in this dissertation, the appearance of female politicians, including clothes, hair, make-up, bags, shoes, and other accessories, as well as voice, height and demeanor are all subject to being discussed in great detail by the media, whether newspapers, magazines, television, blogs, or other forms of social media.

For example, during the 2008 general election, a website called “Dress Like Palin” funded by the California Nurses Association highlighted the money spent on Governor Palin’s wardrobe during the campaign. The website posed the question, “What could you do with Sarah’s spending money?” and included several cutouts of various garments and accessories alongside Palin’s picture. The instructions read, “Drag each outfit over Sarah Palin to see what you could have bought with \$150,000.” Information about each outfit choice was then provided, such as “Valentino Jacket: This \$2500 jacket would cost the typical teacher a full month’s income or the entire winter heating costs for two Midwestern families.” This website was created after information about the amount of money spent on Governor’s Sarah Palin’s clothes and accessories was leaked during the 2008 presidential election. It quickly became a national story reported on and discussed through numerous media outlets. Comparable discussions did not occur with respect to the male candidates involved in the race.

In an effort to understand the why behind this focus on appearance, Margozzini thinks that it is because it is “salacious and people eat it up.” She went on to explain that, “Frankly, more people in this country find what Palin wears more interesting than what she says...the reality is that these women are just as qualified for the ticket as their male counterparts.” Several participants offered examples of the extreme judgments made against female politicians based on appearance. For example, Christensen pointed out that a man’s crooked tie is not a news story, but if a female politician looks disheveled, it could easily become one. Similarly, Crawford said, “I mean men can be unkempt or

disheveled or casual, or whatever, and people make fewer assumptions based on his appearance. But women candidates have to be more careful.” As Christensen pointed out:

If male candidates cover the basics, dress professionally, look the part, I think then there is no further critique. Women politicians are critiqued till the end of time. Every time they cut their hair or change their clothes, or women’s this or that. It is much more a part of the dialogue or conversation politically than it will ever be for men.

When asked if the judgments made about female politicians based on appearance impact voters, Christensen responded that: “It definitely impacts voters, because it calls to attention gender and focuses on personality traits instead of qualifications.” She used the example of Hillary Clinton once again when she pointed out that, “With Hillary Clinton, her ‘cankles’ are not relevant to her ability to serve, but yet it was a story.” One male participant, Dixon, even concedes this point. According to Dixon, society has different expectations of how a woman will present herself, therefore her team must take that into consideration when marketing her as a candidate. As he explained:

In elections you have to acknowledge these things, like Hillary Clinton cannot show up without make-up on because that will be the story. She will be addressing the UN and people will ask why wasn’t she wearing make-up today. You know everyone in TV has to wear make-up, and it is sort of an expectation. Women have to wear make-up. Men for the most part wear professional clothing in business meetings or with the media but there is certainly a different expectation for women I think.

Participants thought that emphasis is placed on appearance for women politicians because, as Edwards points out, people focus on the “lighter topic,” in that though someone may not be able to expound loquaciously on a candidate’s platform, he or she

can have an opinion about or make a comment on that candidate's appearance. As she put it, "It is lighter, sort of like high school gossip, just gossip and entertainment." As a result, appearance becomes the lowest common denominator, serving as the basis of people's opinions on politics. Little concurs, believing that voters' eyes will glaze over when it comes to conversations about policy issues, but when the focus is on how someone looks, the conversation becomes more engaging because appearance is something that anyone can relate to.

According to Margozzini, some of the hyper-focus on appearance among female politicians is due to the fact that women are relatively new to politics. Moreover, Crawford believes that the stereotypes that exist in America with respect to the "appropriate roles" of men versus women feed into the tendency to downplay women's abilities and highlight appearance. Likewise, Kablitz posited that "People are not used to seeing women who look like leaders...and sexism and misogyny exist in our culture." Ferrington also thinks that the issue stems from the fact that America is "a misogynistic culture." Little expanded on this idea, stating:

In our patriarchal society, men's appearance is more regimented in a way. In terms of them wearing suits and just more standard outfits, and for women, they're supposed to look appealing in different ways, you know for the male gaze and so they're judged differently in a political arena.

Clearly, for many female participants there is a link between how society views women in general and how women politicians are treated. Much of what they had to say on the topic reflects what was discussed in Chapter IV from the perspective of female

politicians. Further explanation of this link between gender and appearance is provided in the next section, wherein I examine the layers of meaning embedded within the female politician's appearance.

Meanings of Appearance

According to the participants, there are many appearance-related issues that impact the marketing of a female politician. As consultants and aides, participants know a great deal about what works and what does not when it comes to a successful political campaign, particularly in terms of creating the right message. Achieving this is no easy task, however, in light of the fine line that a female walks as a politician, as she seeks to convey the power and authority necessary for the role while accommodating norms related to female behavior, especially those of appearance.

Communicating Viability

For Dixon, Little, Margozzini, and Renou, the viability of a candidate is a key factor in determining whether he or she will get PAC funding. The primary purpose of a PAC is to raise money around a particular issue or ideology that is then used to fund a campaign. To do this, a PAC uses stories about the candidate and markets those stories as a way to raise money. Thus, a candidate's viability is ultimately dependent on his or her marketability, as it has direct bearing on his or her ability to raise money in support of the campaign.

According to Renou, a congressional campaign can cost up to \$3 million dollars, and a candidate's ability to raise that money is indicative of his or her potential to succeed in politics. In this way, the issue of appearance becomes intricately connected to

the question of viability. That is, as Renou explained, when fund-raising, PACs often choose the most attractive candidate,

When we think of who is going to make a good ask for us and raise us a lot of money, we want them front and center on a stage, at a brunch, we definitely go to the most attractive politicians first... You know, it is having the charisma to ask for money for us. Part of it is the charisma factor but a lot of it is an appearance factor.

Lucy Little, a member of a political action committee based in Washington, DC suggested that while PACs may not necessarily focus on appearance as a key factor when deciding whether or not to endorse a candidate, it does come into play when discussing the candidate's viability. She says that if a specific politician is "really slumpy looking and you know, really off-putting looking, they are not going to be viable." Renou explained that a candidate's looks are part of "a package" and that being young and attractive makes it easier. Thus, she explained that older female politicians often have a harder time appearing pretty enough to "fit the bill."

It is not just a pretty picture. But a pretty picture is very helpful. It is being good to camera, conveying emotion to camera and conveying responsibility and relating to people on camera. So if you are an attractive father of three and you have pretty kids running around, you are going to have a prettier mail piece than you are if you are an older single mom running for Congress and have already raised your kids. It is reality.

According to the participants, it is not just appearance that determines the viability of the candidate, but in the case of the female politician, there is another impediment: Herself. According to Renou, female politicians do not tend to have enough contacts to solicit campaign support from. Moreover, she finds that female politicians are

uncomfortable asking for money in support of their campaigns. Much like Governor Burns's perspective articulated in Chapter IV, in Renou's experience, male politicians will typically boast that they can "bring in a million dollars, ya, that's not a problem! [Using hand gestures and voice intonations to showcase how male politicians bluff, bluster and brag to show bravado]...They really have this confidence that is often very fake and often a shield for what they can or cannot do." Renou pointed out that with female politicians, the opposite is often true:

You sit down with a woman candidate and you say, "We need a plan to raise your first \$100,000." There is worry, there is stress about it. You see this inane doubt. There is doubt with women that you see over and over, they are not going to put the money together, they don't want to ask for the money, they don't think anyone will be willing to give them a \$2500 check right off the bat. And you really have to work with them to show them it is exactly the opposite [than with men], you have to show them the plan and that they can do it and sell them on it.

Self-doubt and the inability to create and sustain relationships akin to those of the old boys' network can keep women from being able to raise the capital required of successful campaigns and, in turn, make them less viable from the perspective of political action committees.

PACs, and the donors who contribute to them, are investing in a political candidate. In Margozzini's experience, a female politician's appearance is a part of her campaign and "doing it right" helps build confidence and raise money. However, as discussed above, it is not always easy to sell a candidate if her appearance is not attractive enough or young enough. Indeed, every participant who is a PAC member spoke of the importance of candidate viability and the role of appearance as a means of

gaining popularity among voters and fund-raisers. Kablitz summed it up best when, as she put it, a politician's appearance speaks to whether he or she is a "good investment."

When I probed further into what she meant by this, she explained:

Candidates who are running for high offices do large dollar, big donor fund-raisers. The people who attend these types of events are looking for people who appear to have executive credibility. They care about the haircut, they care about the clothing, is it stylish, it is up to date. Does this person have a look that is pulled together?

During my interview with Dixon, he shared a yellow book he called the "Original Facebook," which includes photographs of each member of Congress as well as names of their main staffers. As he explained, one day while flipping through the book, he realized that only two of the women in Congress had grey hair. He continued:

But all the men who are around 80 all have grey hair or they are bald, but the fact that there are only two women with grey hair is sort of telling, like it's okay to be an old man but not an old woman in Congress.

Several participants shared a similar viewpoint. Renou pointed to one specific female politician who is a "single mother...divorced, elderly, salt and pepper hair." She went on to say that, "She is fit and she is not unappealing. But she doesn't look sexy." The PAC did provide help with her campaign, but "had to do a lot of make-up, camera angle work with her" to ensure she was likeable, marketable, and finally, successful. As Renou explained:

She is a wonderful legislator. She is really the kind of person you want to be in charge of making your laws. She is caring and smart and aggressive and all those wonderful things. But as far as the freshman class in Congress, she doesn't get the

star power or the attraction and money. She has a tough race ahead and she is going to have a hard time raising this money because she is not as attractive as Sean Patrick Maloney, Kyrsten Sinema...she is an older woman. It is actually frustrating having worked with those women, seeing what they are capable of and how talented they are and to see them overshadowed by younger, more pretty people.

Dixon believes that older female politicians in Congress do not get a lot of media coverage or big donations, both of which can lead to star power. These women are overlooked because they lack the desirability of the younger politicians. As pointed out in the documentary *MissRepresentation*, directed by Jennifer Siebel Newsom, more than 70% of women appearing on television are in their 20s and 30s. As feminist activist Gloria Steinem posited in the film, “A male dominant system values women as child bearers, so it limits their value to the time that they are sexually and reproductively active and they become much less valuable after that.” This lack of value appears to be the case in politics as well. For example, Wilkes described a campaign with an 83-year-old member of Congress running for reelection and how her team managed the issue of the candidate’s appearance, explaining that “[her appearance was] something we had to think about a lot. Frankly, her age was a part of her appearance.” She thinks that men do not get the same treatment with respect to age, offering the example of the campaign in which “Republicans attacked Ed Markey on his age in the Massachusetts Senate race” and how that “falls flat” when it comes to men, but not so for women. In a similar vein, Edwards invoked the campaign between Elaine Marshall and Cal Cunningham in the North Carolina Senate Democratic Primaries in 2010. Elaine Marshall was the North Carolina Secretary of State, while Cal Cunningham was a former State Senator. Both

were qualified candidates for the seat. However, during the primaries, several constituents received phone calls from supporters of Cal Cunningham suggesting that Marshall was too old to run. Marshall was 65 years old at the time. Cunningham was 37. He had a wife, two young children, and a golden retriever. For Edwards, it was his “beautiful family,” or the “pretty picture” Renou mentioned that won Mr. Cunningham his supporters. This picture created a distinction between the two candidates, not based on policy or platform, but on appearance. According to Edwards, Marshall’s credibility was called into question by Cunningham simply because of her age.

It is interesting to note that for Margozzini, the issue of age is a challenge no matter the age of the female politician. That is, it is difficult to find young women willing to run for office because of the work/family tension that requires flying back and forth from Washington, DC and the question of whether to move children. However, when an older woman runs it is also a challenge because of the issues stated above. Clearly, for the female politician, age does not mean experience; it means age.

Appearing Unremarkable: What Does Wedding Food have to do with It?

During my interview with Alexandra Margozinni, she stated that a female candidate’s appearance should be like wedding food. In response to my baffled look, she explained:

It is kind of like wedding food. Stick with me. It has to be good enough that you don’t remember it. Can’t be super bad but it doesn’t have to be really good. Just good enough that you don’t remember it. You don’t go to the wedding for the food. Being moderately attractive is probably the best place to be as a woman so that it’s not notable. If you’re too good looking then there’s a lot of discussion

about your appearance, and if you're not good looking then there's discussion about how unattractive you are. I think because women candidates are not the norm – you have to be unremarkable in your appearance.

The message this conveys is that the female politician needs to “neutralize” her appearance so as to appear “unremarkable” in terms of her looks in order to succeed in the political arena. Clearly, this is a rather difficult challenge, and one that is not as important for male politicians. It is also indicative of the double standard that exists for female politicians in the United States. When I shared the wedding food analogy with Adriana Kablitz, she laughed and said,

That is certainly true. If a woman is too attractive, that is not good. [Laughs] Because women are suspicious of her. And if she not attractive at all, then that is a problem. [Laughs] Because why isn't she better looking? It is a tight rope.

Kablitz used the example of the former Governor of Michigan, Jennifer Granholm, who is considered to be extremely attractive, or as Kablitz elaborates, “has movie star good looks.” To deal with this “situation,” her campaign staff and political consultants sought to downplay her looks, and “just kept that off the table” so that it was “never an issue.” As Kablitz put it, the candidate dressed very modestly and the team “played down her looks so that people would be forced to focus on her policy positions and the issues she was running on.” According to participants, Granholm's problem is not unique, as many female politicians significantly downplay their appearance so as to not “distract” the media who are “driven by sensationalism and focused on trivia versus substantive issues,” Kablitz explained. Even male participants like Armstrong concurred, pointing to the fact that the media pays a great deal more attention to what a politician looks like if

she is a woman. However, there are a variety of factors that, when combined, create the overall appearance of a politician, all of which carry meanings that are tied to whether or not a candidate is judged to be right for the job.

As discussed in the previous chapter, one appearance-related issue that female politicians need to consider is the existence of regional differences in expectations regarding appearance. Apparel choices that may be acceptable dress for a female politician in one state may be unacceptable in another. As Kablitz explained:

You have to factor in...regional differences. This is something that is very troublesome to women candidates because in different parts of the country what is acceptable varies. For example, something women have to deal with that men never have to deal with is ‘Do I have to wear pantyhose?’ A sophisticated woman in New York City is not wearing pantyhose, whereas in places in the South if you are not wearing pantyhose people are wondering ‘Oh my goodness, what is up with her?’ So I think these regional differences matter as well. And a woman candidate has to be very attuned to what is appropriate for her community.

Although the pantyhose issue surfaced frequently in interviews with politicians and political consultants, only female participants mentioned it. Indeed, pantyhose is a problem unique to female candidates and is one that a candidate running for a presidential campaign might have a harder time overcoming. As brought up in the previous chapter, if some states expect her to wear pantyhose and some do not, how does she please all audiences in televised debates viewed across the nation? Again, the emphasis is placed on creating an unremarkable appearance, and in so doing, takes time and energy away from more substantive issues.

A politician’s appearance has to be mainstream, and according to Fearrington, this is true regardless of gender, race or sexual orientation. It is easier to be “folksy” or casual

at a local level, but as Spurlock pointed out, the higher up the ladder one goes, the more mainstream one's appearance should be. He adds that there is a wide range of what is considered acceptable appearance, and as long as one does not deviate too far from the mid-range there is little risk of a backlash. By appearing mainstream, the candidate looks more "relatable" to the voters and hence more approachable. As Fearrington put it, "When you are running for office it is important that you look like the fabric of America." She added that it is about a level of comfort for voters who are concerned that if the politician does not look like them or shop at the same places they shop, then that politician may not represent them well and does not understand their needs or concerns. Wilkes agrees, and thinks that voters are often looking at a politician's appearance, behavior, or mannerisms in order to see a reflection of themselves. She believes that such cues help voters to feel more confident that the politician understands them and can address their needs.

The Appearance Disadvantage

Participants talked about another issue that also surfaced in the previous chapter: female politicians face greater scrutiny because of the appearance variables that they have to deal with. This includes wearing different styles for different occasions, as well as hair, make-up, and jewelry. Renou said:

I think it is worse and harder for women because they have more to do to keep up the appearance. It takes a lot of time to get up in the morning to comb your hair and put on your make-up and all those things that not all of us want to do everyday, and they are expected to spend an hour grooming themselves everyday, and know how to put on their eye make up flawlessly and make sure their hair is all in the right place so that they look very nice on TV. Whereas it is not very challenging for a man to do that. I also think it is harder for a woman because

people comment on your appearance more as a woman. So do I think that there are different standards for men and women? No, I think a man is expected to be professional and put together, but I think it is more detrimental for a woman if you are not.

In a similar vein, Dixon explained that it is not just about more variables, but it is about taking time from an already full schedule. For example, Hillary Clinton was at a real “disadvantage” during the 2008 democratic primaries because her team “had to factor in time every morning to get her ready.” That is, for presidential candidates, every minute of the day is booked, from morning to night. Factoring in the additional hour that it took Clinton to get dressed gave an unfair advantage to her competitor. He says, Barack Obama “could get out of bed, shower, put on a suit and start campaign work,” while Hillary Clinton “had someone come and do her make-up, do her hair, and that just took time every morning.” However, he also acknowledged that the alternative was not acceptable, because if Hillary Clinton, or any female politician, went public without having her hair styled or wearing make-up, it would become a news story. For the political marketer, the goal is to avoid giving the media a reason to hype an appearance faux pas.

An interesting twist on the role of appearance relative to female politicians comes in the form of the purse. Articles have surfaced in both *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* on the topic of purses in Congress (Eilperin, 2012; Parker, 2013). An excerpt from one of them reads:

The Congress of yore might conjure images of spittoons and old male politicians with briefcases, but the 113th has ushered in a historic number of women — 20 in the Senate, and 81 in the House — and with them a historic number of handbags.

In some ways, the female legislator's purse or bag has become one of the most outwardly physical manifestations of the nation's changing deliberative body... Today's purses and bags are as new and interesting of a visual as the red power suit once was. They pop on the C-Span cameras, they serve a purpose and — intentionally or not — they make a statement.

However, it does not end here. Instead, purses have developed into a trend now commonplace in the hallowed halls of Congress – the purse boy. The article goes on to state, “Perhaps no model of purse, however, can signify status as much as having someone willing to carry it,” and concludes with examples of the use of purse boys by female politicians such as Nancy Pelosi and Kyrsten Sinema:

On the first day of this session, a young male aide to Representative Nancy Pelosi, the California Democrat and House minority leader, juggled the coats of female members as he tried to snap a group photo. And on the night of President Obama's State of the Union address, Representative Kyrsten Sinema, Democrat of Arizona, was trailed through Statuary Hall by a male staff member holding her bag. After expertly picking her way through the crowd, Ms. Sinema turned to her aide and asked, “Do you have all of my stuff?” He did.

Both articles were criticized for their sexist media coverage by the initiative *Name it, Change it*, a joint project of the Women's Media Center and She Should Run, which are part of the Women's Campaign Fund (a PAC for female politicians). Criticisms primarily focused on the fact that the articles did not inform the public about how these female politicians are capable professionals. Instead they highlighted the female politician as a deviation from the male standard. The point is that such articles have an “unintended and detrimental effect for the subjects of their stories” writes Rachel Larris, who oversees *Name it, Change it*. Indeed, it even bothered one of the male participants, Pippen, so much so that he spoke at length about the issue during our interview:

The New York Times article that they ran about female members of Congress and they had, you know, staffers hold their bags and that it was kind of like purse boys basically and they – every politician has staff members that carry things for them because you’re running out of fifteen things and you have three seconds and there’s a lot. You know, you have a speech binder and a water bottle, you have all of these things and it doesn’t matter what level of staff you are, I think that everyone who has staffed a member of Congress or a member of legislature or something has done that and so there the interesting thing was this derogatory notion that if you were a male staffer to be carrying a purse. And the people that I saw comment on this article - there was a lot of surprise that *The New York Times* would have been so insensitive as to make that point and if it was a male staffer carrying like a briefcase or an overcoat or an umbrella it would have been no show. It was just this purse hang up.

Pippen was clearly both surprised and offended by the notion of the “purse boy” and believed that such an article would not be written about a male politician.

Just as a female politician must walk a fine line between communicating her viability while not standing out too much, she must somehow learn to assert her authority without losing her mainstream appeal. In the final section of this chapter, such considerations are explored relative to marketing the female politician, which, for the participants in the second and third tiers of the sample, is the ultimate goal, in that successful marketing often results in a successful campaign.

Marketing a Female Politician in a Man’s World

Female politicians are different from male politicians, in that voters do not tend to think of a woman when they think of a politician. As a result, female politicians often face a double bind. For participants, this creates particularly tough odds that the female candidate’s team must overcome when marketing her as a politician. Many of the issues surrounding gender are circumscribed on her body, thereby turning her appearance into a battleground for fighting societal expectations of women in general and women

politicians in particular. Margozzini believes that while people want politicians to be representative of the population, they are still looking for an ideal to be fulfilled, as if the politician is supposed to reflect the best of the American population. However, it is harder for female politicians to fit within the ideal of the fabric of America because there are somewhat divisive expectations of what a woman's role is. This means that a female politician must traverse a large expanse of expectations and is often unable to achieve the ideal.

Christensen pointed out that it is no longer unusual for women to run for office, especially at a local or state level, and that they have come a long way since women achieved the right to vote in 1920. However, female politicians have yet to crack the highest glass ceiling, and face a harder time getting elected to executive offices like Governor, Vice President or President. As she explained:

Women in legislative bodies are no longer unusual. We are much more accustomed to them having children so that we are not having only young women serve or older women serve. Plus we are accustomed to a diverse amount of women in the legislative body. So we have obviously made pretty good changes in making it completely normal that women run for office. Where we are still struggling is getting to that executive role: Governor and President. Because we want a ball-buster when the issue calls for it, we want a really caring person when the issue calls for it. It is really difficult to portray those two things at the same time. That is why we really struggle. It will be interesting this year when there should be 6 women running for Governor...It is really hard to get women into these offices. We are comfortable with women voting on our behalf. We are not comfortable with women making decisions on our behalf.

Christensen discussed the double-bind faced by female presidential contenders that is often attributed as a reason for their downfall. Women have to work much harder to prove themselves as valuable leaders and stewards of the people. However, in the process

they also need to look approachable, relatable, and feminine. For Edwards, female politicians face a “daily battle” in which they have to “prove themselves” to voters to show that they know what they are doing and are equally capable of leading. However, she adds that “they may do something that a man might do and she would be called aggressive.” This is a challenge, as such actions are considered good leadership when done by a man, but when taken by a woman are considered aggressive. Being an aggressive woman is considered a negative. As Edwards explained:

It makes it tougher that they have to deal with stuff that they might not even have to worry about if they were a man. It’s a daily battle. I also think that there are some very strong women out there like Nancy Pelosi. She was a great speaker but oh my god - you might think she is some sort of a terrorist - the way they talk about her!

This double bind is seen as the main reason for the ultimate defeat of Hillary Clinton in the 2008 Democratic primaries, according to Little. The public wants the President and the Commander in Chief of the United States of America to appear tough, and yet people want a female politician to appear feminine. Little posited that because Hillary Clinton was too man-ish, it was threatening to the American population, especially the conservative voters who believe that “women should not have male power.” She believes it is hard for women entering the male domains of power and influence “to remain feminine in that space.” Crawford felt similarly, explaining that the double bind is an important thing for female politicians to overcome to win executive office.

I think one of the challenges is...that it is difficult for women to be both feminine and authoritative. It is difficult for women to be perceived as a strong leader and a good mother...I think people make judgments about whether you like look like a tough leader. Do you look like...you are a mom type person are you tough enough to lead? And if you are a tougher leader are you feminine enough for people to be comfortable with you as a woman? The spectrum has gotten a lot broader in the last 20 years but I think there are those kinds of constraints that make it more difficult for women.

If a female politician is a mother, she is often asked how she will take care of her children, as was described by Senator Barbara Boxer in her book, *Strangers in the Senate*. However if a female politician is single, rumors about her sexuality tend to emerge. Crawford concludes, therefore, that there is a “narrower range of acceptable morals” for women than there are for men. She said, “You know, a man can not be married and that is fine, but if a woman is not married, people automatically wonder what is the matter with her.” Christensen says that people are more forgiving of men’s indiscretions than they are of women’s and cited examples like the former Governor of South Carolina Mark Sanford, the former Governor of New York Elliott Spitzer and former Congressman Anthony Wiener, all of whom were involved in extra-marital affairs and all of whom ran for office again after a short hiatus.

Drawing on obvious gender distinctions that emerge through appearance, such as purses, hairstyles and pantyhose allows the media to focus on how the female politician deviates from the “norm.” Focusing on these details sends the message that female politicians are not as important and should not be taken as seriously as male candidates.

As Little put it, for “an average voter...the impact of appearance is huge.” How voters perceive such messages and the extent to which it impacts their decision-making will be the focus of the next chapter.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the second layer of the interpretation, which included themes that emerged from the data collected with seventeen participants who work in politics in various capacities. From pantyhose to purse boys, themes revealed how a female politician’s appearance impacts the success of her campaign, while highlighting the daily battle she and her staff face regarding gender expectations. In the next chapter, the third layer of interpretation examines these issues from the perspective of the voter.

CHAPTER VI

THEMATIC INTERPRETATION PART III: VOTING FOR THE FEMALE POLITICIAN

This chapter presents a thematic interpretation of focus group data collected with those participants that comprise the fourth and outer-most ring of the sample: the voters. As the final look at themes that emerged from the data, this chapter focuses on understanding the decision-making of voters. This chapter therefore builds on the interpretations provided thus far regarding the experiences of female politicians and those who seek to market them.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part provides information on the voters who participated in the focus groups. The second part is divided into two sections: the first examines how messages about female politicians are decoded by voters through appearance, while the second focuses on gender as interpreted by voters when making a voting decision. Both sections include discussion of the extent to which gender and appearance matters when deciding whether to vote for a female politician.

Description of Participants

A total of twelve individuals participated in one of two focus groups. Focus group participants varied widely in terms of age. Some were retired, while others had just entered the workforce. Seven were married, two were divorced, and the rest were single. According to File and Crissey (2012), 81.2% of U.S. citizens with a bachelor's degree are registered to vote, as compared to just 64% of those with a high school diploma. Thus, it

is no surprise that all of the focus group participants had at least a Bachelor's degree.

Table 5 includes a breakdown of participants by pseudonym, as well as marital and work status. As with the previous two interpretation chapters, participants' real names are not used in the interpretation.

Table 5. Focus Group Participant Data

Name	Marital Status	Work Status
Anne Mancini	Married	Retired
Elizabeth Bennett	Married	Retired
Elina Funar	Married	Retired
Virginia Nilsen	Divorced	Working
Jessica Vera	Married	Working
Deborah Larssen	Married	Working
Kurt Hubbard	Single	Working
Linda Mooney	Divorced	Working
Brittany Page	Single	Working
Vivienne Marsh	Married	Working
Mary Elizabeth Ray	Married	Working
Jason O'Connor	Single	Working

All participants were registered to vote and reasons for this varied greatly. For example, Elizabeth Bennett registered to vote at a young age because she felt that older people were “making decisions about whether younger people would live or die” during

the war in Vietnam. Anne Mancini was inspired to vote by her history teacher in high school. Virginia Nilsen, Elina Funar, Linda Mooney, Mary Elizabeth Ray, Jessica Vera, and Deborah Larssen all came from families that strongly promoted responsible citizenship. As Linda Mooney put it, “It was a family value. My mother said, ‘If I do not vote my grandfather will turn in his grave.’” Vivienne Marsh was a government major in college, and therefore felt it was her responsibility to vote. Mary Elizabeth turned 18 on July 1, 1971, the day that the law changed to allow eighteen year olds the right to vote. She remembers how her father wrote a note in her birthday card that said, “The greatest gift you could ever receive is to be in a country where you have the right to vote.” Jason O’Connor, who recently turned 20, believed he “came of age during a very serious political split” and felt that if he did not pick a side he would not be “an active person in the United States social climate.” Brittany Page and Kurt Hubbard did not provide a specific reason for registering to vote, but confirmed that they were indeed registered and had voted in the past election.

For participants, voting is an emotional activity, and one that they seem to take pride in. During the focus group conversations, many spoke about specific elections in which they were “swayed by emotion” and how the politician’s message impacted them at a “visceral level.” Thus, in an effort to avoid partisanship during focus groups, the participants were not asked to identify specific party registration.

Reading Appearances

Each participant talked about his or her own criteria for evaluating politicians. Some participants focused on issues, such as “women’s rights,” “abortion, “education,”

or “gay rights.” Most participants said they were looking for a politician who was “intelligent.” Likewise, Elizabeth said that a politician’s “track record” and “accomplishments” were important to her. To which Anne replied that she too believed that was an important criterion, however she added, “Now, I am thinking about Obama [who] was so untried...and he did not have much of a track record but I also...look for people who I think are smart...someone who can think on their feet.” Virginia thought it was essential that a politician could help identify and solve problems. To which Elina added, “Unless they are really good at hiring and managing...and could identify people who could solve problems.”

Many participants in both focus groups said they were wary of politicians who “threw clichés together,” and who did not answer complex questions, but would instead retreat to pat statements. They thought this was a sign of avoidance, especially regarding difficult social and economic problems. Deborah explained that she looked for a candidate with integrity, intelligence, and who supported the issues that are important to her. Several of the other participants in her focus group agreed. Apart from intelligence, issues, and integrity, politicians were judged on various other factors, including what appearance communicated about credibility and competence and in turn, the candidate’s ability to do “the job.”

Interviewing for a Job

The themes discussed in the previous two chapters highlight how appearance can be manipulated to make a candidate look more competent. Focus group discussion indicated that participants, as voters, pick up on such appearance cues when making an

assessment of a particular candidate. Participants see a campaign as a job interview in which various political candidates vie for the position and win by convincing voters that they are the best. Like in a job interview, appearance becomes the first thing people notice, whether consciously or not. As Linda explained:

Appearance and professionalism go hand in hand...It is just like if you get a job interview, you are not going to wear jeans with holes in your knees. There is a time and place for everything. I am sure unconsciously we are swayed by appearance. Consciously I don't know whether we are or not.

Likewise, Kurt described the process of choosing which politician to support as similar to picking one's friends. As he put it, "It is the same way you pick your friends, [would] you pick the guy with the ratty clothes?" Clearly, voters are looking at the politician's appearance as indication of whether he or she is right for the job.

Many participants talked about how a politician's appearance affected the way they thought about him or her, especially things like credibility and intelligence, and ultimately how this impacted the politician's election success. One participant spoke about how she disliked Hillary Clinton's matching pants and jackets because it reminded her of the 1970s when she was in school and had to wear matching pantsuits as a rule. In another example, Kurt discussed Senator John Edward's 2008 presidential bid. Senator Edwards's key focus during the 2008 campaign was alleviating poverty, therefore, news that he spent \$400 on his haircuts changed many voters' perspectives about him. While there were several factors that contributed to the suspension of Edwards's campaign for the presidential nomination, the expensive haircuts played an important role, especially among his supporters. Kurt explained how he felt as a voter when he heard about Senator

Edwards's haircuts: "When it got out that John Edwards spends like \$400 for a haircut...as much as I admire his appearance, that is excessive and that definitely changed the way I thought of him."

In one focus group, everyone seemed to agree with Vivienne's statement that "having a good appearance benefits politicians and I think it is probably more important than it should be in terms of voters." Indeed, regardless of whether it is more important than it should be, appearance cues emerged as unavoidable when participants discussed what it takes for a politician to win an election.

Looking like a Winner

Participants emphasized the need to hold politicians to a higher standard when it comes to how they look. Deborah talked about how her trip to Washington, DC influenced her expectations about a politician's appearance. She explained:

The first time I went to Washington DC and I saw that it was a really monumental fabulous looking place, I was very proud. I want the people that represent me to try as hard to be somebody, to be professional, to look like the leader of the free world or at least be aspiring to be that.

Participants discussed how, though they are being held to higher standard, politicians also are very restricted in their choices when it comes to appearance. What is acceptable in one profession may not necessarily be acceptable in the political arena. For instance, Vivienne thinks that while dreadlocks are acceptable on football players, this hairstyle is not appropriate on politicians.

In a similar vein, participants think that politicians with physical limitations, whether in the form of a physical disability or weight, are judged more negatively

because they are politicians. Some participants even discussed the possibility of President Franklin D. Roosevelt being elected President if he ran in today's visual, media-driven culture. Mary Elizabeth asked, "I wonder now if I would be able to vote for Roosevelt in a wheelchair. I don't know whether I could. I hope I could get past [his disability]." Similarly, the issue of New Jersey Governor Chris Christie's weight was cited as an impediment in terms of the decision to vote for him. Mary Elizabeth stated that if Christie decided to pursue a presidential nomination in 2016, his weight would definitely "become an issue." Virginia also mentioned weight as an important issue for politicians, "I think the standards are more narrow," she said. To which Elina added, "People do associate a slender person with being more vital and more healthier." Deborah felt similarly, adding that, "I would like my politicians to be healthy, for sure." Linda pointed out that this has a historical precedent, as being physically fit was one of the reasons why Kennedy won the first televised presidential debate against a sickly-looking Nixon.

Several participants commented on the appearance of specific politicians. For example, Jessica called New Jersey Senator Cory Booker, "a wonderful package," while Virginia thinks that President Obama got elected because he has the "winner look." Similarly, Mary Elizabeth believed Kennedy's "vibrancy" helped win him the election. According to Jessica, some voters may use appearance cues to make the decision about who to vote for if they are undecided. The following excerpt from a focus group conversation explains how appearance can even be leveraged to help politicians win elections.

JV: I think some people are kind of undecided and so they might really be motivated to vote if there is something that is exciting about that person. Like when people got excited about voting for Obama. And back with Reagan he probably traded on being a movie star. I think probably people would have voted for him because he was so good in *Bedtime for Bonzo* or something.
[Everyone laughs.]

AM: Right.

VN: So they thought he could run the country

EB: You know he was a movie star and people liked the idea of having a movie star for president.

Participants' responses are indicative of the extent to which appearance becomes a critical aspect of voter decision-making and how some politicians have benefitted from this. Movie star charm and personality have become important factors in today's media-dominated political elections, especially since 2008 when three well-known, super-star politicians, namely Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin and Barack Obama, became household names and celebrities in their own right. Each had a large fan base through Twitter and Facebook, as well as book deals, television shows, movies and documentaries. For politicians who achieve this level of celebrity, appearance becomes a critical aspect of the campaign and voters clearly respond to it.

Making a Personal Connection

Participants talked about how making a choice among politicians is an emotional process. As such, they seek personal connections based not so much on the politician as a person, but the persona of that politician as communicated by the media. While some participants discussed their connections with politicians in a more general sense, others gave specific examples of politicians that they felt personally connected to. For example,

Elina talked about the first time she heard Sarah Palin speak at the Republican National Convention and how she felt an instant personal connection with her as a candidate:

[Sarah Palin] is physically appealing and she gave me a feeling of confidence. OK, she is a mom, I am a mom. I have a kid in soccer, she has got a kid in soccer. She looks like Tina Fey, I love Tina Fey.

Along with shared family dynamics, Elina's connection to Palin was based on physical appearance, particularly via a celebrity resemblance.

Most of the time participants talked about positive connections, however, there were also instances where this was not the case. The following conversation about the 2008 election between various members of one focus group illustrates how negative interpretations of a political persona can result in little to no connection whatsoever.

EB: I just felt a very angry vibe from [Hillary Clinton].

VN: She is not a warm person.

EF: It made me uncomfortable.

AM: They say she slept her way into politics. They say she would have never become Senator from New York if she had not been Bill Clinton's wife.

Clearly there is a need for voters to feel connected with a candidate and believe that a candidate will represent one's values and goals. In many cases, as participants point out, it is the media that is largely responsible for making, or breaking, this connection. For example, Jason O'Conner talked about how media coverage of a politician's personality is critical in his assessment of the politician. He explained:

I think for me it's a combination of personal integrity and personality. If this is a person who I feel like supports me, and I know that they don't personally support me, but at the same time if I watch interviews and I read about them and I think, "This is someone who cares about who I am based on the way they talk to people, based on the things that they believe in, based on their history." I mean honestly, at times it's almost like, could I feel a personal connection to this politician.

For Jason, a connection with the politician is not established through one-on-one contact with the actual person, but rather through a perceived connection based on what he reads or sees about the politician. The appearance of the candidate is one of the more obvious ways to create a connection with voters, as appearance helps create the public persona or image that voters may eventually connect with.

Being an Easy Target

Appearance has become an integral part of political campaigns, whether or not voters like to admit it. As Linda explained, she thinks about a politician's appearance when making voting decisions, like it or not:

I think that now we are so inundated with the media picking up on people's appearance, as opposed to the issues that they stand for, that it kind of automatically jumps into my mind when I see somebody, like you know, are they trying too hard, or are they not trying hard enough. It is kind of like those are things you end up thinking about and you have to remember it is not about who has the best looks, but who has the opinions which I agree with more. You know, I think it has become such an ingrained part of our society that it is hard not to think about it. It just kind of comes naturally.

Linda's statement points to the role played by the media in shaping how voters perceive the political process and evaluate political candidates. It is clear that Linda would rather be focusing on issues, yet because she is presented with constant messages about the

appearance of political candidates by the media, she admits that it is difficult to keep it from affecting her decision-making.

Jason offered a specific example illustrating how the media's focus on appearance can detract from the bigger issues at hand: the 2010 United Nations General Assembly Meeting wherein the main story dominating most media outlets was Hillary Clinton's plastic butterfly hair clip. Jason described how the media disparaged Clinton's hair-clip choice, saying, "They criticized her for how cheap it was. She was meeting the Head of the State of Israel and how dare she wear such a cheap looking hair accessory." Indeed, several newspapers, magazines, and blogs discussed Hillary Clinton's hair clip, including an article titled, "Appearances do matter: Hillary Clinton's hair clip controversy" that appeared in *Forbes* magazine:

Clinton could have easily avoided the snafu by choosing a less conspicuous clip—say in tortoise-shell—or putting her hair in a bun. The clip, in that gleaming metallic silver, was distracting. And the last thing she should want when discussing international relations with leaders and the media is for some shiny thing on her head to detract from her message. (Laneri, 2010)

The writer's advice to Clinton was to avoid such a fashion faux pas in the future so as to not detract from her role as the Secretary of State.

The notion that appearance choices carry too much weight was discussed by participants in both focus groups. In both cases, the examples were all negative, in that appearance mistakes make the politician, such as Hillary Clinton, an easy target. In the case of Clinton, Jason explained that, "Hillary Clinton is a very smart, strong woman, and I think this is, like, one way to take her down a peg." Kurt added, "people usually shit on

Hillary Clinton...because she is a lot less stereotypically feminine.” To which Jason responded that, “It is because she is not as refined appearance wise.” During the conversation, Vivienne pointed out that a focus on appearance really indicates disapproval of the candidate relative to other issues. As she put it:

It is an easy target. When you are uncomfortable, then an easy target is the appearance. You say “I don’t like that blue shirt.” Well, it is not really the blue shirt that you are talking about, it is something else.

Focus group participants were quick to note that the negative comments and disparaging focus on appearance was usually targeted at female politicians. Participants talked about how women in politics have to put “a face on,” that is, wear make up, dye their hair and even get a “face lift,” while a male politician’s worth is not assessed based on his appearance. Anne said, “A lot of [female politicians] can’t even go out without having a face on.” To which Virginia responded, “And the media mocks them. They comment about women’s appearance, but they don’t really comment on men’s appearance.”

Picking up on a thread brought up by participants in both Chapter IV and V, several focus group participants spoke about male politicians’ suit and tie as a “uniform.” For participants, the suit and tie has become a standard uniform for all male politicians and this provides them with a kind of safety net as compared to women. As Anne pointed out, male politicians “throughout the century...all look the same, they wear the same suit

and all are kind of boring.” Virginia added that male politicians have conducted several polls on how to “look distinguished” and the only thing they arrived at is to “change the color of their tie.”

Although the topic of the suit as a uniform came up in both focus groups, one group took the discussion a little deeper to explore what the uniform means from a gendered perspective:

MR: They are all dressed in the same uniform...if you look around, it is just different ties. It is all dark suits, it is all light shirts, it is all red ties, and blue ties. That is the uniform.

BP: Office uniform.

MR: Yeah, it is. So, understanding when people are uniformed, that you are looking at something other than appearance. It is our cultural view of men as having something on the inside that you are looking at. Whereas women culturally are just objects to view and if there is something inside, that is sort of a new concept.

This excerpt brings to light the interesting viewpoint that as a uniform, the suit and tie worn by a male politician is so unremarkable that it allows for attention to be paid to what the male politician says. On the other hand, the cultural view of women as objects, along with what Anne described as the “always fluctuating and always changing” aspects of women’s fashions allows for more extensive media attention to be paid to the coverage of appearance relative to female politicians.

As voters, participants’ responses point to how appearance becomes center stage because it is the first thing that is noticed, but also because it reflects some fairly well-entrenched biases regarding female politicians in society. As Linda pointed out, it is hard

for voters to ignore the constant attention paid to a female politician's appearance, and the resulting judgments become a part of the voter's decision-making. The next section explores the role of gender relative to appearance in more depth, particularly as it pertains to the decision-making process.

Interpreting Gender

Themes that emerged from the focus group data help to explicate what gender means to participants as voters and how it enters into their voting decisions. Several participants brought up expectations of gender during the two focus groups. Many spoke about expectations of a female versus a male politician, specifically that the female politician must prove that she can perform the role of a strong, powerful politician while appearing feminine and submissive at the same time. Moreover, appearing unfeminine prompts negative responses from the media and, in turn, the voting public. Such pressures point to not just a double standard, but an altogether different and rather impossible standard when it comes to evaluating a female versus male politician.

A Different (and Impossible) Standard

According to File and Crissey (2012), the 65 plus age demographic in the United States has the highest rate of registered voters and the highest rate of people who vote. Participants who are females of this age group remembered the prejudices they faced as women during the 1960s and 70s. For example, Elizabeth recalled the time she had gone to buy a vacuum cleaner and was asked by the salesperson to take a form home to her husband for him to sign. She recounted anger and frustration as she responded to the salesperson, "I was like, 'Lady, I sign my own stuff. I am making the money and I am

writing my own check.’ I was so furious. I was so insulted to be treated like that. It was such a shock.” Others, like Anne, spoke about how some of the female politicians faced similar prejudices during that period.

Women politicians of my era really had to fight their way up because a lot of women didn’t go to law school. They would have been secretaries. It was a lot harder climb for them. They had to be much more focused and very determined in order to get up there. And I’m sure there was a period of time when they did have to man-up in order to be taken seriously by the man.

Anne’s points are similar to those expressed by Governor Burns in Chapter IV, in that these women did not have the same access to networks as male politicians to raise money or to build contacts.

Participants discussed at length the different standards applied to male as compared to female politicians during both focus groups. In response to the question of why male and female politicians are judged differently, Mary Elizabeth explained:

We are not equal. Women are still fighting in the power structures that are male. It is not acceptable [because] women are supposed to be the softer sex. We are supposed to be the quiet and internal sex. There certainly is a double standard in the expectation of female behavior, and female appearance goes with it. When men wear the uniform, their body shape does not show in the same way as the females. Nobody comments on the male chest size but there is always a comment somewhere [about female politicians’ appearance]. Like Hillary Clinton’s legs, they were a little heavy, so they had to comment on that. What does that have to do with her ability to do anything? And yet there was a comment.

This double standard is so common that some participants even got a little worked up when talking about the discriminatory media coverage of female as compared to male politicians. For example, Brittany brought up the idea that the female politician must

meet all expectations, and essentially the idea that she is perfect, to which both Kurt and Linda responded:

BP: I was thinking about this concept we talk about, of women wanting to have it all. Whatever that means. It kind of seems like it is the same as politics. People want women to have it all in politics. They want the [female politicians] to look good and say the right things about issues and everything. They need to look good, sound good and you know all other subtitles that come along with it. But with men, you all have said they can just say the right thing and people will forget about or look past the fact that maybe they are not the best looking [candidate].

KH: It seems that women have this double duty. They must fulfill their role as a politician and as a member of Congress and they must also fulfill their duties as a woman, while men don't have to work to fulfill their duties as a man. They are men and that's what they are. You know, they don't have to worry about this.

LM: They have a wife behind doing all this.
[Everyone laughs.]

As these participants clearly suggest, the impossible standards applied to women are not applied to men. This speaks to Kurt's point about the "double duty" that a woman must achieve, wherein she must fulfill societal expectations of being a woman (e.g. appear feminine, meet societal expectations of a wife and mother) and fulfill the duties required by her elected position. For Linda, it is about men not having to do both because they are men, as they have wives to take care of such things for them. Indeed, participants commented on the stereotypical idea of the adoring wife who accompanies her politician husband, whereas the reverse is not true. Virginia stated:

I think there is such inequality in a sense that you have a guy who is running for Congress and there is his wife right behind him and the kids are lined up. [However, in the case of female politicians] the husband is not seen behind her or looking adoring too.

Such subtle cues, or lack thereof, reinforce societal expectations of the gender dynamics between men and women. While it is de rigueur for a wife to be photographed looking adoringly at her husband who is seeking office, it is not expected that the husband will look at his wife in the same way when she is running for office. These are small factors, but they add up over time to impact the voter decision-making process, albeit at an unconscious level. Moreover, focus group discussion revealed that much like what images portray about gender, words can send powerful messages to voters.

Looking Presidential Without Being a Witch

Participants in one of the focus groups talked about how certain words are used to describe men versus women in politics. Indeed, the use of gendered language is a form of attack on female politicians frequently used by the media, as seen in the literature review discussed in Chapter II. Participants were sensitive to such practices, as they clearly picked up on the use of certain words, particularly when referring to female politicians. As Deborah explained, “There are words used on women that are not used on men. Take the word ‘shrill’, it is [a] common [word]. The words ‘shrill,’ ‘shrew,’ ‘witch.’ They are only used on women.” Vivienne offered the following explanation: “When talking about men [politicians], you just say ‘He is very strong’ but [being strong] is never negative.” However she thinks that is not the case with Meg Whitman and Carly Fiorina. Meg Whitman, the former President and CEO of EBay ran for Governor of California. After successfully navigating the Republican primaries, she lost to Democratic contender Jerry Brown in the 2010 gubernatorial election. Carly Fiorina, on the other hand, was the former CEO of Hewlett Packard who challenged and lost to Senator Barbara Boxer for

the California Senate seat, also in 2010. Both came into politics from successful business backgrounds and as Vivienne explained, both were considered “really strong and really aggressive. All negative terms.”

Participants also talked about the extent to which the popular term “looking presidential” implies a man (usually white), who looks as though he should be in power:

DL: How many times have you heard in the last two election cycles that so and so “looks presidential?” How much does that matter?

M: What does it mean to look presidential?

MR: A neat appearance, you know attention to your hair and shoes.

VM: Not too much.

BP: Not too sexy.

DL: You don’t think the term is used just to exclude women on the surface?

LM: There is that too. But there are certainly women that you see on TV that we would think of as competent executives.

DL: But if you use the term, ‘looks presidential’...

MR: You get that picture of a white figure...

BP: A white male with a suit and a straight back, and tall.

KH: And grey hair.

JO: Ivy league education.

DL: I think the term would exclude women

VM: I would exclude based on race too. It excludes the Hispanic look, the Jewish look. You are basically excluding what hasn’t been.

Although it is not necessarily a derogatory term, when someone “looks presidential” it does suggest a certain race, gender, and age group as well as a particular educational background. Unlike more obviously derogatory terms like “witch,” “looking presidential” is encoded with gendered meanings, likely because there has yet to be a female president. Ultimately, such terms are designed to communicate the politician’s persona, and as participants explained, voters pick up on and respond to them on some level.

The Importance of Being Ladylike

Judge Caroline Klein Simon is often quoted for commenting that for a woman to succeed she must “look like a girl, act like a lady, think like a man, and work like a dog” (Perry, 2009). When it comes to being a woman in politics, acting like a lady is an imperative. One participant, Virginia, brought up the 2012 Missouri senate race between Democratic incumbent Claire McCaskill and the Republican challenger, Todd Akin. She described how Akin called McCaskill “unladylike” during one of the debates:

She challenged him in a debate and he responded by saying that she didn’t act like a lady. He was attacking her and she gave it right back, and [so] he said, ‘You are not ladylike. What is wrong with you?’

This incident highlights the critical importance of being ladylike in the field of politics, even today. Moreover, this type of incident is not atypical. In 2010, Democratic Senator Arlen Specter told Republican presidential hopeful Congresswoman Michelle Bachmann to “act like a lady” during a heated exchange between the two on a radio program (Montopoli, 2010). The expectation that female politicians appear ladylike was also remarked upon by Mary Elizabeth who stated:

[Female politicians] are supposed to be more refined. If someone comments on a female politician who is behind doors cursing just like a fellow male politician might, it – it is unlady-like. They would say, ‘Is she trying to be one of the boys?’

Thus, participants suggest that while a female politician may benefit from thinking like a man, she is definitely not supposed to act like one.

In one of the focus groups, Elizabeth talked about how everyone would benefit from an expanded palette of gender norms that would allow men to be nurturing and women to be strong, and to do so without professional consequences. For Elizabeth, this would be especially advantageous in politics because it would allow women to bring femininity into their elected roles, even that of Commander-In-Chief, without men looking down on the idea or deeming it to be less powerful. However, according to Elizabeth, the reality is that women have to change to become more “manly” in order to succeed in politics, and to be less collaborative, stating that “in order to get elected you have to get rid of all that part of yourself. You cannot be seen as too mushy or caring or too collaborative.” In a similar vein, the oratory style of female politicians was discussed by participants. For example, Anne remarked that Hillary Clinton was a fiery orator and this seemed “unseemly” for a woman. Interestingly, she said one of the reasons she voted for Barack Obama was because he was not “particularly abrasive” and was “well-mannered.” Ultimately, being a politician requires debating, negotiating, and strategizing. Such skills are not particularly ladylike, and indeed, run counter to those of being quiet, submissive, and gracious. By expecting female politicians to be refined and ladylike, society creates an unstable and largely unsustainable position for them as politicians.

Forever Young

Participants in both focus groups discussed the differences in the way older women in politics were treated as compared to older men. Several outlined the problems that older female politicians face:

EF: If you're a woman you need to be young, if you get up and age for any of that political stuff, I don't know, get a little bit of chin or grey hair [it would damage your career]. You have to keep yourself up to that [feminine beauty] standard. You know, dye your hair and facelift all that.

EB: Women are not allowed to go grey.

EF: They are not allowed to get old.

M: Why are they not allowed to get old?

JV: Maybe their value comes from the ability to have children.

EB: Maybe it is their sex appeal.

AM: We don't have that image of the wise old woman.

EF: You think of the crone, the old hag.

AM: All the older women images are not good.

According to participants, older women are devalued by society and this is especially the case in the world of politics. This links back to the discussion of age that surfaced in Chapters IV and V, and points to the insurmountable obstacle that women face who are looking to succeed in politics: Never get old.

It is also important to note the double bind faced by female politicians relative to age. Often, young women with children do not want to enter politics at higher levels because of the long hours and extensive travel that is required. Moreover, if they do enter

politics as young mothers, they are often questioned about their ability to care for their children. This question is never asked of a male politician with a young family. At the same time, if a woman enters politics once her children are grown, she is usually older and therefore faces the reality of age-based discrimination.

Participants pointed to an additional way that age hurts a female politician: when an older female candidate is compared to a younger candidate, whether male or female. For example, participants in one focus group thought that in the 2008 Democratic primaries, as compared to Hillary Clinton, Obama's younger age along with his "beautiful wife and young children...appealed to younger voters." In this case, it was not just the age of Barack Obama but also that of his family. It is interesting to note that Hillary Clinton may have herself benefitted from the same bias towards young families when her husband ran for President in 1992. Having a young wife and child in tow was a stark contrast to the much older George and Barbara Bush.

Even when age may not be on the minds of voters or politicians, the media will often bring it up, especially in regards to female politicians. Linda offered an example of the time Nancy Pelosi was questioned about retiring at a press conference:

LM: The picture may never leave my mind. Nancy Pelosi and the rest of the Democratic Women's Caucus were holding a press conference. And somebody had the gall to ask her the question of whether she felt that she should step aside and let the younger generation take over. You know, nobody would ask that of Harry Reid, nobody would ask that of John Boehner or any of the whole group of aged, white men that are running the show.

JO: With men, age is just considered a strength and with women it is considered to be a weakness.

Clearly, this incident left an impression on Linda, providing strong support for the notion that age discrimination is part of gender discrimination when it comes to female politicians. Participants agreed that there is in fact a bias against older female politicians, and this can compromise their appeal among voters.

For participants, voting is a process in which appearance cues are often used to assess the candidate's viability as well as a way to build an emotional connection with him or her. Participants' responses revealed how different terms used to talk about gender, as well as the different expectations of gender impact their perceptions of political candidates and ultimately their voting decisions. As voters, participants acknowledged the influence of appearance, consciously or unconsciously, in their decision-making, particularly when it comes to female politicians. Participants rely on appearance cues to draw inferences about a candidate's credibility, competence, personality, and to make connections with the candidate. This was the case even though participants acknowledged different standards applied to female politicians due to different expectations based on gender. Such impossible expectations as appearing both ladylike and powerful, tapping into the old boys' network without behaving like one of the boys, and never graying or getting old impact their decision-making process, whether they like it or not.

Summary

As the third and final layer of the thematic interpretation, this chapter presented the themes that emerged from the two focus groups conducted with registered voters. As described in this chapter, appearance plays a critical role in the decision-making process

as a voter evaluates a candidate during the long interview process of a campaign. In the next chapter, I examine the broader significance of the three layers of thematic interpretation for understanding how issues of gender, appearance, and power enter into the marketing of the female politician.

CHAPTER VII

THEORIZING THE INTERPRETATION

Interpreting the experiences of the participants through the various layers that comprise the sample helps to not only explicate the lived experiences of the female politician, but offers a deeper understanding of the issues of gender and power that influence appearance management when marketing female politicians. However, integration and synthesis of the participants' experiences will allow for an even more in-depth analysis of the data, particularly from a more theoretical point of view. Thus, in this chapter, I will focus on linking the themes that form the three layers of interpretation to the theoretical perspectives discussed in Chapter II. It is important to note that the focus of this chapter is not to psychoanalyze participant's responses, but to create a broad understanding of the phenomenon by using Freud's psychoanalytic framework to further contextualize the themes that emerged throughout the interpretation.

Women in Politics

Election results do not just reflect whether a candidate won or lost. Instead, there are multiple factors that contribute to the success or failure of a political campaign. According to the data collected for this dissertation, such factors include personality of the candidate, handling of issues at the international, national, state, and local level, availability of PAC and super PAC funding, social media, scandals within the political party or among the candidates, national sentiment, and even the zeitgeist. From a botched

website rollout to the wrong setting for a photograph, a campaign win is never a certainty. As the three layers of interpretation highlight, such factors are even more critical for the female politician as she traverses the unstable terrain that is political marketing.

It would be impossible to isolate a single reason why a female politician either succeeds or fails, however certain trends are clear. Even 94 years after women got the right to vote, and with 10 million more registered female voters than male, the United States has yet to elect a female president, or even vice president (CAWP, 2011). Combined with being ranked 90th in the world for female representation in government, and the fact that 24 of the 50 states in the country, including California and New York, have yet to elect a female governor, such statistics appear indicative of a deeply-entrenched bias against female politicians.

As seen in the thematic interpretation chapters, women have a harder time getting support from political parties, as well as family and friends, to run for office and have a harder time securing major campaign contributions. The women that do overcome such obstacles often face another set of hurdles, such as biased media coverage both during the election campaign and after. Indeed, an excessive and overt focus on a female politician's appearance has been established in various studies (c.f., Falk, 2010). Thus, one goal of this dissertation was to explore this focus on appearance and investigate its role in political marketing within a phenomenological framework that is informed by a feminist psychoanalytical theoretical perspective.

Politics are entrenched in daily life within the United States and reflect a wide range of points of view, making for a somewhat dynamic, if not volatile, topic of study. Hence the decision to include data from diverse points of view, which also underscores the value of the different layers of interpretation. Interviews, focus groups, and supplemental secondary data provide an in-depth investigation of the topic. The result sheds important light on what it means not only to be a female politician today, but to market one as well. In the following three sections I present key aspects of the interpretation in relation to the theoretical foundation outlined in Chapter II, including: (1) *Freud and the Female Politician*, (2) *Freud, Appearance, and the Female Politician*, and (3) *Freud, Political Marketing, and the Female Politician*.

Freud and the Female Politician

Each layer of thematic interpretation highlights the unique struggles experienced by female politicians. From lack of basic resources, such as access to restrooms, to sexist media commentary, female politicians face several obstacles that hamper their chances of success in politics. Whether voters, staffers or politicians, all of the participants in this study think that female politicians face bias, sexism, and an increased level of scrutiny simply because of gender. For example, participants talked about how such terms as “hag,” “witch,” or “MILF,” are used specifically to describe female politicians in a derogatory way, to demean them and their accomplishments, and to evoke negative voter responses. According to participants, female candidates must work “doubly hard” to prove their credibility and capabilities for the position and are more likely to be “vilified” once in office. This clearly indicates the existence of a double standard faced by female

politicians. For example, participants from each of the sample groups noted that a tough woman is seen as a “bitch” while a tough man is seen as a “leader.” Overcoming this double standard means that she must achieve the male standard. Indeed, female political candidates have an uphill climb.

Participants frequently discussed how the biases against female politicians are socially, historically, and culturally ingrained. As State Senator Lancaster put it, voters are influenced by “stereotypes and assumptions, based on appearance and gender, [that are] made about competency and leadership.” Female politicians face a “daily battle” in their attempts to meet the impossible expectations of appearing authoritative yet feminine, strong but not tough, and clever but not cold. Appearance is used to objectify them and devalue their candidacies, often to the advantage of their male opponents. To understand these “ingrained” biases towards women as well as the underlying reasons why society devalues the female and the feminine, this dissertation employs theories from women’s studies, specifically utilizing Freud’s psychoanalytic theories alongside Lacan’s reinterpretation of them as well as that of several feminist authors. Such a comprehensive theoretical framework helps explicate how gender hierarchies are formed in society and how these underlying issues manifest themselves in modern day politics.

Female Politicians and the Oedipal Complex

Participants in each sample group brought up the issue of self-doubt and a general inferiority complex in women as reasons for their lack of success in politics. Indeed, self-doubt has prevented some female politicians from believing they could represent the people effectively, that they could get community campaign support, or that they could

raise the money required to win an election. Self-doubt seems to not only keep women from entering the political arena, but it also plays a role in their campaigns and elections.

According to State Senator Lancaster:

Women tend to doubt...men don't think about 'Am I good for this job?' 'Can I do this?' as much as women do. Women have a lot more self-doubt. And if women have self-doubt, then the electorate will have some of that doubt as well.

As a result, the ingrained self-doubt experienced by some female politicians inevitably impacts their lived experiences, specifically their confidence levels and how they conduct themselves. Voters pick up on such cues, and this creates doubt in their minds about the candidate's ability to do well in the elected position. In Freudian terms, this vicious cycle is best explained by the Oedipus Complex.

According to Freud's psychosexual development theories, the girl child realizes her castration, turns hostile towards her mother and never fully resolves the Oedipus complex, thereby accounting for a weaker super-ego in women (Mitchell, 1974). Moreover, her genital inadequacy creates an inferiority complex and an acceptance of her subordination to men (Grosz, 1990). Such responses ensure that women take the secondary, dependent position that establishes the gender hierarchy in patriarchy. According to Freud, these feelings of deficiency and inadequacy mean that women view themselves as unfit to engage in society as equals to men. Likewise participants in this study point to this perception of being "not good enough." As State Senator Lancaster put

it, “In our society, there are filters of how we see things and women are lesser.”

Similarly, this issue emerged when Kate Renou spoke to educated and successful women who had contributed to their communities and were being tapped to run for office:

You sit down with a woman candidate and you say, ‘We need a plan to raise your first \$100,000.’ There is worry, there is stress about it. You see this inane doubt. There is doubt with women that you see over and over, they are not going to put the money together, they don’t want to ask for the money, they don’t think anyone will be willing to give them a \$2500 check right off the bat. And you really have to work with them to show them it is exactly the opposite [than with men], you have to show them the plan and that they can do it and sell them on it.

Such self-doubt seems to envelope many female political candidates, and as Governor Burns indicated, keeps them from being bold or bragging about their accomplishments, and even believing in themselves as winners. In contrast, men, in general, do not have such self-doubt. Governor Burns believes that this self-doubt further impacts female politicians negatively, as it means that they have a harder time fund-raising. Likewise, Kate Renou believes that this “inane doubt” stops women from “fully reaching their potential in politics.”

Freud’s theories of the Oedipus complex, and Lacan’s subsequent interpretations of them, are used to explain differences in the sexes, including how men acquire the position of subject and women of object, as well as society’s devaluation of everything feminine (Grosz, 1990; Mitchell, 1974; Rubin 1975; Tosone, 2009). As the girl goes through the Oedipus complex she realizes she does not have the phallus or the power it symbolizes, which prompts her inferiority complex. According to Mitchell (1974) “castration...as a ‘lack’ in the case of the girl, has always had an important place, but its

main accountability was for the inferior regard in which women are socially held” (p. 75). In addition to the female feeling “lesser” than the male, according to Freud’s theories, the successful resolution of the Oedipus complex is one reason why men assume a dominant sense of self and why they believe girls, or anyone who does not have a penis, are inferior. The male child repudiates his love for his mother for the place of subject in culture, believing that the possession of the phallus means power, while its absence, powerlessness (Grosz, 1990).

In a society where men are the subject and the bearer of the phallic power, it is no wonder that the idea of a “purse boy” has been given so much attention by the media. According to Rubin (1975) the phallus is a set of meanings conferred upon the penis (p. 190). Phallic power symbolizes the masculine ideal or ‘*hegemonic masculinity*’ that values patriarchy, physical control and sex hierarchy (Freud, 1914; Rubin, 1975; Trujillo, 1991). Therefore, the thought that a man would carry a woman’s accessory for her, as a part of his job, is extremely demeaning in a culture where the man is supposed to be the superior. Indeed, for decades, female aides have carried briefcases and other such items for male politicians. However, with female politicians in power, the gender roles are reversed and the idea suddenly becomes newsworthy. Consequently, the “purse boy” is not about an accessory, rather it is about symbolic power, and the emasculation of men at the hands of powerful women (Larris, 2013).

Based on Freud’s theories and Lacan’s interpretations, the data speak to the likelihood that men feel threatened by female politicians in as much as the latter are seeking power. The resulting response could be considered castration anxiety or the idea

of their symbolic phallus somehow losing value due to the female being in power. As Nicole Christensen explained, female politicians are discriminated against for the simple reason that “Men don’t want to see women as strong, because it challenges their power, their paradigm, and their ego.” Indeed, many participants, whether voters or politicians, talked about how men feel threatened at the idea of female politicians in the United States. Some believed that this is because female politicians will tend to fight for causes that impact the rights of women and girls, such as access to birth control, or protection against violence such as rape, domestic abuse or sexual harassment in the military. Participants in the focus groups discussed how men tend to find such issues to be “super threatening.” To further the point, Anne Mancini stated, “Historically, politics has been all about men and I think what changed the world is the birth control pill. Once women could control their reproduction, they could control their lives. Until then women really didn’t have control.” Likewise, participants in the focus groups believed that restrictive reproductive legislation was a way of “keeping women down” so women could not seek control in society or politics. According to Rubin (1975), who employed the theories of Freud, Levi-Strauss and Lacan to understand the subordination of women, the phallus symbolizes the dominance of men over women and is a means of keeping women in check to ensure their subordination in the kinship system. Female politicians are a threat to the phallic power because they represent not just the particular women that seek to break away from the kinship system to gain power and move from object to subject, but the possibility of actually dismantling the kinship system by creating or supporting

legislation that will give control to women. It is also a reason not to elect female politicians.

The idea that men seek to prevent women from gaining political power also surfaced in the interview with Adriana Kablitz, in that she pointed to sexism as one reason why it is so difficult for female politicians to succeed:

M: You mentioned sexism earlier and I want to unpack that a little bit. Is there a reason why sexism is directed towards women politicians?

AK: It is because women candidates are seeking power. And the people who have power don't want to give it up.

M: People who have power? Whom exactly are you thinking of?

AK: The power structure in the United States is older, white men. They hold most leadership positions across the board. An example of how that is playing out right now nationally and at state levels is very restrictive reproductive legislations that are being introduced and passed in legislatures all across the country.

M: I want to make sure I got this right, according to you, white men in power don't want to give up power and therefore we see sexism directed towards women politicians?

AK: I think it is part of it. The way that works out is that anybody who has power doesn't want to give up power. So they will do everything they can to hold on to it. So one of the best ways to marginalize a woman candidate is to treat her like a sex object. From a broader perspective that is an effective technique, you know what I mean? [Laughs]. They do it because it is very effective.

Participants often used the example of Hillary Clinton when discussing how men reacted when they felt threatened by female politicians seeking power, as well as the subsequent attempts to prevent them from having it. For example, Virginia Nilsen proposed that the anger and hatred shown towards Hillary Clinton stems from people

being upset by the fact that she sought to gain political power: “It was like, ‘How dare she?’ People hated her [because] she had the audacity to assert herself. It was like, ‘Who does she think she is?’” Likewise, Governor Burns explained:

Hillary Clinton [and women like her] with tremendous credentials and skills...on the surface show they are equal to men, and most often, better than men. That does not resonate well with men, especially for those who are out of work or those who are uneducated or underpaid in their position. I think there is an anger, an undertone of anger.

This anger is not necessarily just from “uneducated and underpaid” men, rather it is felt by men across all walks of life. Just a few of the examples taken from the top 50 sexist quotes towards female politicians by *Name It Change It* include Hillary Clinton being called “Bitch,” “Glenn Close from Fatal Attraction,” and “like everyone’s first wife outside probate court.” Perhaps the most telling example of castration anxiety comes from one MSNBC talk show host, quoted as saying that he “involuntarily crosses his legs every time Hillary Clinton comes on television.” And of course there is the Hillary Clinton nutcracker with “stainless steel thighs” available for purchase. The nutcracker is perhaps a modern day representation of ‘*vagina dentata*’ a common motif in folklore that symbolizes the male fear of castration as well as the “monstrous feminine” (Otero, 1996, p. 273).

From politicians to voters, this notion of men being threatened by the success of female politicians emerged multiple times throughout the interpretation. Several themes discussed within the three interpretation chapters point to how voters pick up on certain cues, such as the adoring wife as a commonplace “prop” used by male politicians, yet the

reverse is not seen. As Kathy Edwards pointed out, in American society, men feel that they are supposed to be the stronger gender, the provider, and the idea of a female politician “makes them very nervous,” thereby making it difficult for them to accept women in leadership roles, particularly those that represent real power such as governorships or the office of the Vice President or President of the United States. Elina Funar takes this point a step further, describing the necessary conditions under which the United States of America would elect a female president.

The economy ought to be good for a woman to be elected President. I think when things feel safe and when men have jobs, they are more likely to vote for a woman. If they are feeling like they are letting down their families and they can't pay their bills – they are going to be angry if some woman's doing it and they can't get a job. So I think if most men are employed and earning and wages are higher - I think if men are employed and if lower education jobs have better wages then I think that group of men who have sort of hung on to themselves would feel stronger, if they are doing better and they have money for various tech things and whatever, then it will make them feel more comfortable with having a woman [as President].

This excerpt underscores the perceived threat of the female politician in a role of power. Indeed, several female politicians and political consultants elaborated on the need to appear “non-threatening” as an important characteristic of marketing a female politician, especially to men. For example, as Andrea Fearington explained:

We live in a sexist and misogynistic culture that struggles with empowered women...I think Sarah Palin does not ruffle any feathers. That her existence is not an affront to the misogynistic and sexist culture we live in. But Hillary Clinton is...I think people struggle with women in power. Men struggle with women in power. I think women struggle with women in power.

Interestingly, the premise that men are not alone in their harshness toward female politicians was also clearly revealed by the thematic interpretation. As Kate Renou put it, “If you go by poll data, men are harsher on judging female politicians. If you go by catty comments, you can say women are a little harsher.” As Mitchell (1974) explains, according to Freud’s theories on penis envy, when a girl accepts her castration and inferiority, her self-love is shattered and it triggers hostility towards her mother as well as women in general, whether consciously or unconsciously. According to Freud (1963), penis envy is an envy of the idealized penis, whatever that may represent – it is the thing one does not have (p. 83). In the case of women voters, envy of the freedom and power that female politicians have may be enough to lead to the negativity, or perhaps it stems from an unconscious anger over a female politician being able to overcome her inferiority complex while trapping other women within the gender hierarchy. As Dowd (2008) explains, it is easier for women to see other women struggling, but harder for them to accept those who are thriving. Indeed, as power-seeking behavior is considered agentic and masculine, it likely triggers hostility from both men and women as response to the proposition of female politicians disrupting the gender hierarchy (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010).

Several participants, both male and female, attributed the harsher judgments of female politicians to the older generation. Adriana Kablitz believed that “older women are less likely to vote for women candidates.” Likewise, John Duckworth said, “older people have a different set of values” yet go to the voting booths in large numbers, and therefore, based on his experience, it is critical to adapt a female politician’s marketing

strategy when “you are portraying your candidate to an older demographic.” As a female politician who dealt with this issue throughout her career, Governor Burns stated, “I do believe that at some level, folks who are in their 50s and 60s and 70s have an inclination to be more critical of women.” She adds:

Over 50, for the more educated, you really found a diminishing percentage of stereotypical negatives. But with that group 60-63 and on up through 90 there are just harsh stereotypes and harsh predispositions to be against you. In my own polling, my own focus groups [we could see this trend]. At one point in time someone said to me ‘You will never win this group’ because there is nothing you can do. Their life experiences are that of the husband and the wife, the male and the female have been based on a time that no longer exists. Ozzie and Harriet are dead and this is the last generation that lived through Ozzie and Harriet.

Such examples from the data point to how some of Freud’s thinking, such as the Oedipal complex for girls and boys, along with castration anxiety and penis envy, may have relevance for explaining the modern day gendered dynamics that exist in politics. Such notions help to ground the interpretation in a framework of gender and power, providing a context in which broader meanings that emerged in the interpretation may be explained. A further issue highlighting the gender and power dynamics operating within the political arena is that of male bonding, particularly the old boys’ network.

The Old Boys’ Network

The old boys’ network surfaced within the interpretation as a factor that suppresses female politicians by creating an environment that hinders them from finding campaign funding, or getting election support from their own political parties.

Participants who are politicians provided several examples of being excluded from access

to resources or from decision-making in situations where the “old boys’ network” was at play. Examples included being left out of the decision regarding the party nomination, a front-runner in a mayoral election getting funded at half of what her male opponent received, and even struggling to have close restroom access in legislative buildings. Each is indicative of the diverse ways female politicians are consistently shut out by the patriarchal political network, which the participants often referred to as the “old boys’ network.”

Based on the theories of Freud and Levi-Strauss examined in Chapter II, the old boys’ network can be seen as a contemporary form of male bonding and kinship structure created to keep women in object-space by restricting access to the resources required to move from object to subject. It indicates a systematic social apparatus which evolved to keep women subordinated and allow men to benefit from their exchange (Rubin, 1975). According to Grosz (1990), the phallus has value only in comparison to those who lack it. Additionally, the power of phallus is critical to privileging masculinity as well as governing exchanges within kinship structures (Grosz, 1990). Although Freud wrote of tribal cultures and primitive societies in *Totem and Taboo*, the old boys’ network as it presents itself in politics today emerged from the interpretation as a modern day manifestation of such structures.

Such a reality is not unfamiliar to Governor Burns, one of the few women who has managed to overcome the obstacles to be elected to an executive office. Governor Burns cited sexism and misogyny as key reasons why women encounter “barriers in the upper echelon in business or politics.” Similarly, Andrea Fearington talked about how

the old boys' network is also highly visible via the congressional committees where "all the main committees in Congress that are powerful, [such as] Ways and Means, Energy, Health, Commerce, Appropriations, there are no female chairs, even though on some there are female members... There is a glass ceiling that is real." These examples are indicative of how the male bonding that occurs in politics creates barriers designed to exclude females from positions of power, such as being chairs of committees.

Focus group participants saw it similarly, expressing that, "basically men look out for men." This is most evident when Kevin Dixon talked about how if men "see a credible woman on the ballot... those men will sit there and collude and figure out, 'How do we get another woman to run to split the women vote?'" Dixon believes that this "gender politics" strategy works to the disadvantage of female politicians who, when pitted against each other, may split the female vote, thereby increasing the chances that the male candidate will win the election. That men "collude" with other men to play gender politics is clearly another form of the kinship structure in modern day politics. Dixon provided another example to further his point of "gender politics" and how men look out for each other. He discussed an email sent by Montgomery County Republican chair Jim Allen blaming a black female politician, Erika Harold for challenging Republican incumbent Rodney Davis in the Republican primaries for the 13th Congressional district in Illinois. Upset that the Republican primary would use up a significant portion of the campaign finances for Rodney Davis, making him weaker against the Democratic challenger Ann Callis in the November 2014 general election, Allen stated in an email:

Rodney Davis will win and the love child of the D.N.C. [Democratic National Committee] will be back in Shitcago by May of 2014 working for some law firm that needs to meet their quota for minority hires. The truth is Nancy Pelosi and the DEMOCRAT party want this seat. So they called RINO [Republican in Name Only] Timmy Johnson to be their pack mule and get little queen to run. Ann Callis gets a free ride through a primary and Rodney Davis has a battle.

The little queen touts her abstinence and she won the crown because she got bullied in school...boohoo..kids are cruel, life sucks and you move on..Now, miss queen is being used like a street walker and her pimps are the DEMOCRAT PARTY and RINO REPUBLICANS...These pimps want something they can't get...the seat held by a conservative REPUBLICAN Rodney Davis and Nancy Pelosi can't stand it...Little Queenie and Nancy Pelosi have so much in common but the one thing that stands out the most...both are FORMER QUEENS, their crowns are tarnished and time has run out on the both of them. (Emphasis in original).

According to Dixon, this email highlights how race and gender biases can impact women negatively even within their own political parties. Furthermore, the old boys' network was explicitly mentioned in the response by *Republican News Watch* Editor-in-Chief Doug Ibendahl, when he wrote:

If officials in my party fail to understand how destructive it is to attack an impressive person like Erika Harold merely because she dares to challenge the good-old-boys, the GOP will remain a losing party for decades. This stay-in-the-back-of-the-bus mentality destroys any hope the Republican Party has for regaining momentum in future elections.

That politicians and those in the political marketing field also acknowledge the persistence of the old boys' network to disenfranchise fellow party members based on gender and race shows the pervasiveness of kinship structures in politics. Moreover, the old boys' network clearly transcends party lines and is prevalent at all levels in politics, from local to national. For instance, participant David Spurlock spoke about how a

county commissioner put up pictures of his female colleagues on a website *Am I Hot?* and asked various male friends and colleagues to rate them. When a female colleague took offense, Spurlock says that she was shunned because the male colleagues thought “it was funny.” Two more participants, Nicole Christensen and Samantha Wilkes, brought up similar lists, such as “*Hotties on the Hill*” or “*The 10 most attractive women in Congress*” that female politicians have to deal with in the struggle against the kinship structures working to disempower them.

A bevy of examples emerged in the thematic interpretation to highlight the relevance of Freud’s theories in understanding the old boys’ network as a form of male bonding and kinship system meant to undermine female politicians and, in turn, naturalize male dominance in politics. Much like the ways that Freud’s psychoanalytic theory can be applied to understanding the gendered experiences of female politicians, such theorizing also helps to deconstruct some of the reasons underlying the overt focus on appearance when it comes to female politicians.

Freud, Appearance, and the Female Politician

Writing about women as the *Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir (1952) posited that for a woman to achieve femininity, she must renounce her claim as sovereign subject to become object and prey. Basing her thoughts on Freud’s psychoanalytic theories, de Beauvoir went on to write that, in contrast, men enjoy the advantage that man’s “vocation as a human being in no way contradicts his destiny as a male,” and the fact that his “phallus is assimilated with transcendence means that a man’s social and spiritual successes endow him with virile prestige” (p. 723). de Beauvoir (1952) thought that

unlike women, men are not divided, and therein lies their advantage. On the other hand, successful, emancipated women fall into the trap of their own femininity. As de Beauvoir (1952) explained:

This is the conflict that singularly characterizes the situation of the emancipated woman. She refuses to confine herself to her role as female because she does not want to mutilate herself; but it would also be a mutilation to repudiate her sex. (p. 723)

de Beauvoir (1952) suggests that femininity is artificially defined by customs and fashions and that a woman must follow society's norms of femininity if she does not want to devalue herself. According to de Beauvoir (1952) paying attention to appearance and dress is a requirement, and one that her professional success depends upon. This notion surfaced time and again throughout the interpretation, as participants stated that appearance, while superficial, is critical to the success of a female politician. As Andrea Fearington put it:

It comes from a misogynistic culture, which focuses more on what is on her head and on her body than in her head. There is more of a focus on female politicians and what they look like because we focus more on what women look like than what they think as a society, as a whole culture.

Participants in each of the sample groups echoed Alexandra Margozzini's sentiments when she stated that women face a higher level of scrutiny regarding their appearance and that this scrutiny is much harsher than what men face. She also discussed how a female politician is judged "by her appearance and her ability to take care of her home or family." Participants repeatedly pointed out how females were constantly judged

on such criteria that is rarely applied to male politicians. Moreover, participants recognized how even the slightest faux pas regarding appearance could easily become a main news story for female politicians, thereby making the importance of appearing “unremarkable” critical to a female politician’s campaign success.

Such observations by participants tie in to de Beauvoir’s (1952) own reflections on this issue, as she notes that women’s dress and appearance “were originally meant to doom her to impotence, and they still remain fragile” (p. 724). de Beauvoir described how women’s appearance is noticed down to the very minutia of detail, on which she is judged, such as “stockings run; heels wear down; light colored blouses and dresses get dirty; pleats unpleat” (p. 724). Female politicians repeatedly face such issues and are expected to be prepared, as Senator Lincoln pointed out:

Always carry an extra pair of nylons or pantyhose because if you are in a debate or you are out, if people notice a run in your hose, it is a whole different ball game. In terms of your appearance it was a whole different challenge because people won’t pay attention to what you are saying because they can’t think beyond the fact that you have a run in your hose [Laughs]. If you are out on a hot day in the south and you are traveling around and perspiring, take an extra blouse. So if you spill barbeque sauce on it or your are perspiring and need a fresh shirt, I am sure that this might be something they could tell a man then, but the inference was something then and I am sure it is even now [that] it is less acceptable for women to have barbeque sauce on their blouse, to be perspiring or to look disheveled.

Looking disheveled is a challenging aspect of appearance management for female politicians, as it easily becomes a news story that works to the detriment of the candidate.

The hyper-focus on the appearance of female politicians can be linked to historical and cultural attitudes towards men versus women and remains a critical aspect

of a female's success via political marketing. Stereotypes regarding "appropriate" roles and associated behaviors tend to support this overt attention paid to appearance. As Anna Belle Crawford stated, "Women are judged much more frequently and often much more harshly on their appearance than men." Moreover, in Mayor Mitchell's opinion, reducing a female politician to articles of clothing is demeaning, detrimental to her career, and a way to marginalize those who are making in-roads to higher offices. For participants, this rang true regardless of political party affiliation. For example, Jason O'Conner described how focusing on a hair-clip and being criticized for it was a way to take the then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton "down a peg," highlighting how appearance criticism is used to diminish all female politicians.

Yet appearance related attacks are not used solely to target "stereotypically less feminine women" such as Hillary Clinton. They are also used to disparage a traditionally feminine female politician such as Sarah Palin. According to participant Joseph Puccio, "Sarah Palin was speaking what most people were feeling." So in order to "diminish her character," the Democratic Party made her out "to be a sex symbol which kinda turned around into a female boob." Once she was positioned as a sex symbol, Puccio believes it was hard for voters to be able to focus on what Palin was saying, as they were led to pay more attention to her appearance than her words. A similar viewpoint was shared by Lucy Little, who states that focusing on women's appearance is a "way of disempowering them" and that the American "cultural dynamic" grants people "appropriate license to talk about women's appearance." Participants of all sample groups echoed Little's sentiments when she said that "Women are judged first and foremost on how they

look...I can't think of the last time I heard a comment about a man's outfit in politics...[however], women are up for grabs – it is open season.” This is problematic, in that, according to Little,

If you are judging a person on how they look and how much they appeal to people on a scale that is designed on sexuality and basically heterosexual appeal then you are not taking them as seriously as you are a male politician.

Organizations such as *Name It, Change It* have been formed in response to such sexist coverage of female politicians by the media. This organization publicized the recent media focus on State Senator Wendy's Davis's pink running shoes instead of her eleven hour filibuster in the Texas legislature. Such emphasis can clearly be considered as way to undermine her efforts to win the 2014 November gubernatorial election (Kohn, 2013). Organizations like *Name It, Change It* convey the idea that female politicians want to be taken seriously, and that they would rather talk about policy issues than purses. An article titled, “The Real Problem with Writing about A Senator's Purse” published in *Slate* stated that female politicians do not start talking about their shoes, clothes or handbags, they do so only when they are asked about them by a reporter. Moreover, “usually the woman is trying to avoid answering the question or trying to hide her annoyance at being asked because they don't want to come off as a bitch” (Larris, 2013).

This excerpt highlights the bind faced by the female in politics, whereby she is either forced to talk about her appearance choices or come off looking arrogant and rude to the members of media.

As seen in the interpretation chapters, appearance also becomes a code to indicate disapproval of the candidate stemming from deeper, perhaps unconscious issues. The interpretation highlights several examples, from voters to politicians and everyone else in between, suggesting that appearance is often an easy target for voters to show their objections to the idea of a female politician. For example, Anna Belle Crawford discussed how appearance is something that voters use to convince themselves about whether or not the candidate is right for the position:

I don't think there are too many people who look at a candidate and decide 'I won't vote for this person because I don't like the way the candidate looks' but on the other hand people that they will see 'Oh she's too tough, she doesn't meet my values, I'm not like that.' So they convince themselves that the cues that they are getting from appearance are about other qualities. So while nobody wants to say they are voting based on appearance, I think appearance plays a role.

She goes on to state that:

Voting is ultimately an emotional act...People take all these cues, these non-verbal, non-policy cues and they make an argument about whether this person is good or not good for the job. It is a very long-winded way of saying I don't think voters exclusively make a decision based on appearance, but it helps shape people's attitudes about other parts and ways that affect voting, no doubt about it.

What Crawford is saying is that appearance becomes a stand-in for other factors that may play a role in the voter's psyche, but that he or she may find difficult to describe or

explain. As Kathy Edwards pointed out, appearance is a light, easy topic that, “like high school gossip,” people can easily talk about even if they may not be familiar with a candidate’s experience or platform.

Finally, much like the ultimate job interview, time, energy and money are valuable resources spent on the months- or years-long process of election campaigning. By using up these resources to manage haircuts, hemlines, hosiery and other appearance related issues, a female politician has the disadvantage against her male opponent. Additionally, participants of all sample groups talked about how men’s appearance is often limited to a uniform: suit, tie and jacket, typically of a restricted color palette. Similarly, de Beauvoir (1952) noted that men have to “barely” care about appearance, in as much as men’s clothes are not important to their success and therefore “need not be original” (p. 724). On the other hand, she notes that the woman “knows that when people look at her, they do not distinguish her from her appearance: she is judged, respected, or desired in relation to how she looks” (de Beauvoir, 1952, p. 724). As Governor Burns pointed out, politics adheres to the rules of society, so it is not surprising that the expectations of male politicians differs from those of females. Where this difference seems to become the most critical is in the marketing of the female as politician.

Freud, Political Marketing, and the Female Politician

Kotler (1972) stated that a political candidate must be multiple things to multiple people, and for this reason he outlined four distinct “markets” that a candidate must appeal to simultaneously: (1) the voters, (2) the political party, (3) contributors, and (4) special interest groups. The interpretation of the data illustrates a changed political

landscape, wherein the candidate's interface with voters has shifted from being one-way to becoming a continuous feedback loop. This loop goes back and forth between the candidate, along with his or her team of staff, aides and consultants, as well as various groups such as political parties, contributors, PACs, volunteers, media, special interest groups (such as lobbyists and think tanks), and of course, the voters. Moreover, the interpretation points to how the voter exchange process has become similarly interactive and reciprocal (O'Shaughnessy, 1990). Today, social media creates a platform that makes it easier for voters to interact with the politician or with others interested in the politician, and facilitates a high level of visibility for the candidate among voters and volunteers. Examples include how candidates like Sarah Palin, Chris Christie, and Mitt Romney have been the subject of social media outlets like Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, and YouTube, all of which allow voters and the media to play a significant role in the success or failure of a candidate today.

As seen throughout the interpretation of the data, marketing a female politician is a journey riddled with both stumbling blocks and landmines. Challenges come in many forms, whether the old boys' network working to maintain male dominance, or the media's insistence on making a story out of any slight appearance-related faux pas. Clearly, appearance is a critical aspect of a campaign, in as much as voters make decisions based on which candidate they like moreso than which candidate's policies are best for the country. This is particularly the case when it comes to female politicians. Freud's psychoanalytic theories offer one approach to explaining the underlying reasons for the continued sexist treatment of female politicians in society. Such theorizing helps

to explain how unconscious issues may be impacting a female politician's success or failure. Gaining an in-depth perspective highlights the importance of appearance when creating a strategy to build a political brand image for a female politician. It is hoped that by focusing on this topic, findings from this dissertation can be used to market the female politician in ways that allow her to overcome the built-in kinship structures and entrenched stereotypical views of what a woman in politics "should" be, which clearly operate to prevent her from becoming what she could be.

As a final point, Freud's psychoanalytic theory is a monumental body of work. Added to it are the decades of various feminist interpretations, making it if not impossible, at least outside the scope of this dissertation to employ all facets of it to a single study of women in politics. It would be also be problematic to claim that there is a single explanation for what surfaced in the data. Instead, the intention was to highlight how aspects of psychoanalytic theory as well as kinship structures can be used as a means to better understand why such an emphasis is placed on appearance when it comes to marketing female politicians and to contextualize some of the gender-and-power based struggles seen to characterize the lived experiences of the female politician. As discussed in Chapter II, political marketing is a relatively new field within the marketing discipline. This dissertation offers a first and important next step towards interdisciplinary research on the topic of appearance and political marketing in the hopes that the door to understanding what it means to be a female politician will remain open for continued research and exploration.

Summary

In this chapter I discussed how some of Freud's psychoanalytic theories could be used to help explain the modern day gender hierarchy and power dynamics between male and female politicians, including the overt focus on appearance when it comes to female politicians. Implications of the interpretation were also considered for their relevance to understanding what these dynamics mean for marketing female politicians. In the next chapter, I reflect on the findings of this dissertation and offer suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER VIII

REFLECTION AND IMPLICATIONS

In doing this dissertation, I sought to understand how gender hierarchies and power dynamics may help explain the focus on appearance when it comes to female politicians. This dissertation approaches the problem from the perspectives of political marketing, women's studies, and appearance management. As a result, this dissertation creates a bridge connecting these three fields that is the first of its kind and creates a new area of interest that is relevant not only for its theoretical contributions, but also for practical purposes. Moreover, this study is among the few to consider a diverse range of perspectives on the topic, including the politician, the team that helps create her image, as well as people who help market it, and finally, the voters who rely on it to make their decisions.

In this chapter, I reflect on the process employed to achieve the study's objectives and consider the implications of the study's key findings for further research on the topic of appearance management and political marketing relative to female politicians. To this end, this chapter is divided into two sections: (1) *Reflecting on the Research Process* and (2) *Implications of the Outcomes*. In the first section, I reflect on the research purpose and objectives relative to the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. In the second section, I articulate the key findings that emerged from the interpretation and provide some practical recommendations for marketing the female politician. I conclude

with a discussion of the limitations of the dissertation as well as potential opportunities for further research.

Reflecting on the Research Process

In this study, I employed a phenomenological framework informed by a feminist psychoanalytical theoretical perspective to examine the role of appearance management in marketing a female politician. This interpretive methodology allowed me to glean deep insight into what it is like to be a female politician and to better understand the interplay of gender, appearance, and power within this experience. Such insights help to shape an understanding of what these factors mean for marketing a female politician.

To do this research, I immersed myself in the field of politics and political marketing for over two years, primarily by volunteering and networking to make important contacts and gain trust among key members of the political community across the country. Despite my efforts, it was a challenge to find female politicians for this study. Since female politicians comprise only 18% of the House of Representatives, 20% of the Senate and 10% of the current Governors, they are few in number to begin with (CAWP, 2014). During the course of the research, various aides and staff members to female politicians stated that because of the paucity of female politicians, those in office are already inundated with requests for interviews and meetings. Consequently, many do not have the time or are unwilling to participate in research studies. Thus, there is scant research that includes the voice of the female politician. While analysis of media representations of female politicians provides an excellent overview of the matters pertinent to gender and politics (Falk, 2010; Kahn, 1994; Mandziuk, 2008), such an

approach does not provide an understanding of the lived experience of the female politician. Thus, the voice of the female politician is missing in current academic research. This dissertation offers one step towards addressing this gap.

Once I gained access to the participants and they fit me into their busy schedules, all of them readily shared their knowledge on the subject of politics and political campaigns, particularly in regards to their experiences as or with female politicians. Participants all seemed to share in my excitement about the relevancy of the topic, especially since it was being studied from an interdisciplinary perspective. Additionally, all were supportive of the methodological approach as it makes both academic and practical contributions.

It should be noted that in my attempt to get the voice of the female politician heard, I often had to silence my own. As an out lesbian, it was more of a challenge to gain access to members of the Republican party as compared to the Democratic party. Obviously, the former typically avoid individuals and conversations that prompt issues of gay marriage or discrimination against gay employees in the workplace (Reynolds, 2014; Sullivan, 2013). Indeed, to gain access to participants from the Republican Party, I had to silence part of my own identity so that I could gain a balanced perspective through the data.

An interesting phenomenon emerged during my conversations with participants about female politicians. Both male and female participants agreed that there is a significant and overt focus on the appearance of female politicians, yet both groups diverged significantly in terms of their views on the underlying reasons for it. Male

participants suggested that female politicians have more appearance and dress choices, and therefore the media has more to write about and voters have more to discuss and comment upon. On the other hand, female participants believed it was a societal, ingrained bias stemming from a patriarchal culture that permitted a certain level of misogyny. All female participants in all sample groups, regardless of age, race, or occupation seemed to share this perspective. They believed that focusing on a woman's appearance was one way the media crafted coded messages suggesting that she should not to be taken seriously, thereby undermining her credibility. This divergence is indicative of the lived experiences of men and women in society and the perpetuation of gender hierarchies not only in politics, but in all walks of life. Such findings are based on the interpretive methodology employed in this dissertation and offer insight that media analysis research does not offer.

By doing this dissertation, I learned that mixing academic thought processes and field realities is not easy in the research process. In order to maintain a neutral perspective, I found that I needed to bracket my own opinions and experiences in order to get deep into the phenomenon when collecting data and ensure that the themes would not be pre-determined by the theoretical considerations. Similarly, once I finished collecting data, I strove to allow the data to speak to stay true to the phenomenological process. By crafting layers of interpretation, I was able to show how the experiences of the participants in each sample group laid the groundwork for an understanding of appearance and political marketing as related to female politicians. Each participant's perspective was unique and added a new dimension to the interpretation as a whole. With

each layer of the concentric circle, a richer, deeper understanding of the topic emerged, as was highlighted in the thematic interpretation chapters. From there, I revisited the literature to theorize the significance of the interpretation for understanding the broader issues of gender and power in politics, the implications of which I will discuss in the next section.

Implications of the Outcomes

This dissertation highlights how Freud's theories can help to explain the underlying issues that female politicians face today. Based on the interpretation, in this section, I examine the journey of the female politician as framed by the theoretical perspectives employed in this dissertation (see Table 6). According to Freud, the resolution of the Oedipus complex maintains a profound influence on the unconscious mind throughout a person's lifetime (Moore & Fine, 1992). As described in previous chapters, according to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, as the girl recognizes her genital inadequacy, it creates a sense of deficiency and inferiority. She then makes her journey from active to passive, from subject to object, or as State Senator Lancaster put it, the reason why our society sees "women as lesser." Overcoming her feeling of inferiority and deficiency is the first challenge a female politician must surmount to have the confidence to run for office.

Gender hierarchies that stem from the resolution of the Oedipus complex are pervasive in society, therefore the female politician faces several hurdles once she decides to campaign. While running for office, a female politician often has to overcome a great deal of self-doubt. This point clearly emerged in the interpretation when Governor

Burns described her personal experience as to how hard it is for women to “believe [they] are going to win...be proud of their accomplishments...and ask for the [financial] contribution.” Similarly, Kate Renou spoke about the doubt female politicians expressed in conversations with her as a PAC political director, particularly relative to raising campaign funds. Applying Freud’s theories regarding the Oedipal complex, this dissertation helps explain why female politicians face such challenges on a regular basis. Women who transgress gender norms typically face a backlash (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). Indeed, findings of this study provide further support for this, as participants across the board believed that men felt threatened at the idea of powerful women.

Employing Freud’s psychoanalytic theories of the Oedipal complex, as well as castration anxiety and penis envy provides an explanation for the hostility often exhibited towards female politicians. Likewise, Freud’s theories on male bonding provide a possible explanation for the marginalization of female politicians. A modern day manifestation of male bonding in the form of the old boys’ network can help explain why women have a harder time raising campaign funds, are excluded from important party deliberations, and why once elected, they have trouble gaining access to positions of power in committees in Congress. Findings point to the constant scrutiny of the female politician’s appearance as well as the language differentials, such as “catfights,” used to belittle and demean them as leaders. Finally, the findings also illustrate the gendered dynamics and power plays that female politicians face via issues such as the “purse boys” that become news stories in the media.

Participants acknowledged how the intense media coverage devoted to the appearance of female politicians makes them more aware of the societal norms surrounding gender. Further, participants acknowledged how subtle appearance-related cues, such as hats, hemlines and hose, as well as hairstyles and hair-clips, frequently impact their assessments of female politicians. Participants agree that these issues point directly to the gender hierarchies ingrained within society. Indeed, one of the more compelling findings of this dissertation is the extent to which male candidates are protected from an overt focus on their appearance thanks to the suit. Wearing a uniform essentially forces the media, as well as voters to consider the candidate as a person rather than the clothes he is wearing.

Similarly, participants discussed how coded messages such as “looking presidential” created an archetype that subtly excludes the female politician. Participants also noted the discrimination towards female politicians in the form of language differentials, coded terminology and biased media coverage. Findings illustrate how a female politician’s lived experience reflects a constant balancing act between impossible expectations, such as not looking too sexy or too dowdy, being powerful but not threatening, appearing feminine yet strong, or looking young but not too young. Likewise, if a female politician campaigns as a young mother, she is questioned on her ability to be a good caregiver, something young fathers running for office do not have to contend with.

Table 6. Journey of the Female Politician

Stage of Campaign	Issues Faced by Female Politicians	Related Theory
Before running for political office	Overcoming sense of inferiority Overcoming feelings of deficiency	Oedipal Complex
While running for political office	Overcoming self-doubt (e.g., to raise campaign funds) Overcoming coded messages in media (such as “looking presidential”) Overcoming societal expectations based on gender (such as women should dress feminine) or gender roles (such as women should take care of children) Overcoming overt focus on appearance Overcoming hostility from men and women	Oedipal Complex Castration Anxiety Penis Envy
While in political office	Getting access to resources (such as restrooms) Getting access to positions of power (such as committee appointments) Overcoming coded messages (such as pursue boys) Overcoming overt focus on appearance	Oedipal Complex Male Bonding

Over the course of the dissertation, I spoke with several women in politics and political marketing who had broken many barriers, and yet there remained a sense of frustration as they struggle to succeed in what is still considered to be a man's domain. However, I also heard several participants express hope at the possibility of having a female president in a few years, specifically Hillary Clinton's bid for the 2016 presidential nomination. Some thought that the current wave of support for Clinton might help bring the nation together through the idea of the first female president. Others thought it might tear the country apart through sexism and outdated expectations for gender roles and, in turn, create an even greater struggle for female politicians.

However, the ageist and sexist coverage that Hillary Clinton received after her daughter Chelsea's pregnancy announcement is evidence that gender bias is alive and well in the United States (Frumin, 2014). NBC News, ABC News, as well as reporters at MSNBC all discussed whether this announcement would put a "bump" in Clinton's aspirations for the presidential nomination in 2016 (Wemple, 2014). Indeed, even Charlie Rose asked, "President or Grandmother?," as if they were mutually exclusive categories (Hagedorn, 2014). Some articles suggested that becoming a grandmother may be a reason to not run for President (Burns, 2014; Feldmann, 2014) even though the same question was never posed to Mitt Romney, a grandfather of more than 20 grandchildren (Frumin, 2014; Hagedorn, 2014; Wemple, 2014). Thus, it is clear that the double standard continues as the country readies for the 2016 presidential elections.

Although results of this study and the literature support prevailing views of traditional gender hierarchies in political marketing, participants were aware that the field

is not static, much like the norms and rules of society in general. That is, though patriarchy has existed for several millennia, things continue to change rapidly, as more women graduate with bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees than men (Diprete & Buchmann, 2013), as female leaders take positions of power across the political landscape of the world (Adams, 2011), and as business leaders like Sheryl Sandberg lead movements to eliminate words such as “bossy” used to label female executives (Petri, 2014). Likewise, in a popular television network show called *Scandal*, a female presidential candidate, Congresswoman Josie Marcus, reveals the sexism inherent in the campaign process. In one scene, she tells off a reporter in the following manner:

I know what prejudice looks like. It is not about experience, James. It is about gender. [Political opponent Governor Sam] Reston’s saying I don’t have the balls to be President and he means that literally. It’s offensive. It’s offensive to me and to all the women whose votes he’s asking for. It is not just Governor Reston speaking in code about gender; it’s every one, yourself included. The only reason we’re doing this interview in my house is because you requested it. This was your idea and here you are, thanking me for inviting you into my “lovely home.” That’s what you say to the neighbor lady who baked you chocolate-chip cookies. This pitcher of iced tea isn’t even mine; it is what your producers set here. Why? Same reason you called me a ‘real-life Cinderella story.’ It reminds people that I’m a woman without using the word. For you, it’s an angle, I get that, and I’m sure you think it’s innocuous, but guess what, it’s not. You’re promoting stereotypes, James. You’re advancing this idea that women are weaker than men. You’re playing right into the hands of Reston and into the hands of every other imbecile who thinks a woman isn’t fit to be commander-in-chief. Seven years I served in the United States Army, which is seven more years than Governor Reston ever served. A fact you conveniently omitted from my introduction. How about [introducing me as a] soldier? Lieutenant?

This excerpt from a popular television show, while fictive, encapsulates much of what the participants in this dissertation either personally experienced or had witnessed. It is important to note that such television shows like *Scandal*, *Veep*, *Political Animals*, and

Commander in Chief can help promote female politicians, normalizing the idea of a female leader in the minds of voters while revealing the different and unequal standards that exist in representations of political candidates. Similarly, organizations such as *Name it, Change it* call attention to real-life issues facing female politicians. Ultimately, participants were hopeful that as society continues to evolve, the younger generation would not adhere to gender hierarchies as rigidly, and therefore will be more accepting of female politicians in positions of power.

Overall, participants were positive about the role of females in politics of the future. Many pointed to small changes in the field and spoke about the notion that as more women are elected to office in the United States, more people get used to the idea of females as leaders. For example, Arizona, known to be a conservative state, has had three females serve as Governor consecutively since Governor Jane Dee Hull took office in September 1997 (CAWP, 2014). In 2012, New Hampshire sent an all-female delegation to Congress with two female senators, Jeanne Shaheen and Kelly Ayotte, and elected a female governor, Maggie Hassan, as well as two female Representatives, Carol Shea-Porter and Ann McLane Kuster (CAWP, 2014). Indeed, in some cases it looks like the idea that women do not belong in politics has become somewhat outmoded.

Female politicians are also finding new ways to market themselves by focusing on their gender and appearance in a positive light. As shown in this study, female politicians often are put on the defensive about appearance, or seek to “neutralize” the issue.

However, there are instances where females are reclaiming their femininity and “owning” what that means. For example, Adriana Kablitz talked about how former Texas Governor Ann Richards did this:

My favorite politician, of all time, is the former Governor of Texas Ann Richards, and she had snow-white hair, and again it was something that worked for her. But maybe that is the thing. If the candidate does a good assessment of their physical appearance and takes something that might be viewed as a weakness and spins it on its head, maybe that is the way you overcome it. Ann Richards, with her hair, she photographed herself getting her hair done in a beauty shop she had sent postcards with that image and raised money that way [Laughs]. Women loved it. There she was getting her hair done in a beauty salon.

Governor Richards used her female appearance as a marketing strategy that allowed her to portray her feminine side as a positive aspect of her candidacy, thereby neutralizing any attempts by the media to make it a negative. A similar strategy was recently adopted by Hillary Clinton as she positioned herself for a possible presidential bid in 2016, in that Clinton’s Twitter profile says: “Wife, mom, lawyer, women & kids advocate, FLOAR [First lady of Arkansas], FLOTUS [First lady of the United States], U.S. Senator, SecState [Secretary of State], author, dog owner, hair icon, pantsuit aficionado, glass ceiling cracker, TBD [To be determined].” By owning her much talked-about hairstyles and pantsuits, Clinton makes it harder for the media to use it to ridicule her. In other words, by making her appearance an issue, Clinton was making it a non-issue.

Regardless of the sample group, participant responses highlighted the emotional nature of politics (Guzmán & Sierra, 2009; Hoegg & Lewis, 2011; Jackson, 2003; Lawson, Lenz, Baker, & Myers, 2010). Moreover, their responses pointed to a myriad of factors that are considered, whether consistently or not, not just when marketing a female

politician but when deciding whether or not to vote for one. Findings of this dissertation point to the ways that a female politician must learn to integrate appearance management as part of her overall marketing strategy and development of her political brand. This means carefully considering how to handle appearance-related issues, how her support staff “manage” it as they are marketing her, how the PACs, media and volunteers propagate it, and how the voters react to it. In other words, appearance is the “it” that cannot be ignored. This study highlights the importance of appearance management in the field of political marketing, yet as pointed out in Chapter II, this topic has not been discussed in the literature on appearance management, while only scant attention has been paid to the topic of appearance management in the political marketing literature. Thus, this dissertation fills a vital gap as it contributes to the knowledge within both fields.

This dissertation also adds to the research stream started by Tosone (2009) by applying Freud’s psychoanalytic theories to understanding issues of gender and power within political marketing. Furthermore, this study investigates the reasons behind Dowd’s (2005) contention that successful women face more hostility in society. Finally, by moving beyond the study of the topic through media analysis alone, this dissertation fills a critical gap by presenting the voice of the female politician, something that has been missing thus far in research on the topic.

Due to the paucity of research on female politicians in the field of political marketing, this dissertation is the first to begin with the lived experiences of female politicians, and to consider these experiences relative to how female politicians are

marketed. Further, although there is significant research that illustrates the extent to which voting is an emotional act (De Landtsheer et al., 2008; Guzmán & Sierra, 2009; Hoegg & Lewis, 2011; Jackson, 2003; Lawson, Lenz, Baker, & Myers, 2010; Lenz & Lawson, 2011), this study is the first to address how appearance enters into voter decision-making relative to female politicians. Finally, by using the concentric circle approach to defining the participant sample, this dissertation offers a comprehensive examination of the role of appearance in marketing a female politician that includes the politician herself, those who market her, and those who ultimately decide whether or not she is “right” for the job.

According to Guzmán and Sierra (2009), there are three pillars of a political brand: (1) physical attributes of the candidate, (2) the personality of the candidate, and (3) the promises a candidate makes to the electorate during a campaign. This dissertation adds to that premise by suggesting that it is not simply the physical attributes, but rather the physical appearance of the candidate that is a pillar of the political brand. For example, participants in the voter sample group did not simply care about the candidate’s hair or facial features, but the entire appearance. Participants expected their political leaders to look neat, professional and well-groomed and used appearance cues to ascertain a candidate’s credibility, competence, and even intelligence. Moreover, this dissertation emphasizes the link between PAC endorsement, funding, and physical appearance. As Kevin Dixon, Lucy Little, Alexandra Margozzini and Kate Renou explained, a candidate’s viability is very closely tied to her appearance. Findings reveal that a young and attractive candidate makes a “pretty package” that raises money easily

versus “an older single mom.” PAC endorsement and funding has become an essential aspect of not only presidential campaigns but also campaigns for Congress. Since PACs are a relatively new concept within the field of political marketing, there is scant research on the topic. As the first to substantiate the link between a candidate’s appearance and PAC funding via those involved in politics, this dissertation contributes to the literature on the topic. In addition, this dissertation is one of the few studies to systematically reveal issues of ageism in political marketing. While youth and technology such as social media and the Internet are often discussed in research on political marketing (Cogburn & Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011; Garcia-Castñon, Rank & Barreto, 2011; Towner & Dulio, 2012), issues of ageism with regards to matters such as fund-raising are not often considered. Whether it is a lack of star power as an aging female politician, issues of grey hair, or derogatory terms such as “crone” or “hag,” this dissertation reveals several of the ways that age is a disadvantage for female politicians.

While studies have utilized gender trait theory (Paul & Smith, 2008) or role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Simon & Hoyt, 2008) to explain biases against women in positions of power, this dissertation is the first to seek to understand what drives the systemic, long-standing biases that underlie issues of discrimination against female politicians. By employing aspects of Freud’s psychoanalytic theory as seen through the lens of feminist theorists such as Simone De Beauvoir and Juliet Mitchell, this study acknowledges the critical nature of the role of appearance in the success or failure of a female politician. Whereas much of the research ignores or downplays the role of appearance, this study provides a broad interpretation of its significance via

psychoanalytic theory. Likewise, Freud's psychoanalytic theory has rarely been used to examine the role of gender in political marketing. This dissertation carries forward the work of Rubin (1975) by employing Freud's theories of the Oedipal complex and that of male-bonding, along with Levi-Strauss's theories on kinship structures to understand the prevalence of the old boys' network in politics and explain the possible reasons for the suppression of female politicians.

In doing this dissertation, I sought to develop a 360-degree view of the research problem. By including a diversity of perspectives on the topic, findings provide a holistic view of what it means to be a female politician. Future research is needed to go even deeper. For example, although this research examined the role of gender in political marketing, it does not delve into issues of race. Intersectionality is a critical subject in feminist literature and could significantly impact female politicians in political marketing. That is, the expectations of appearance of a white female politician may be different than that of a Black, Hispanic, Native American or Asian female politician. As the population of the United States grows more diverse, female politicians of diverse religions, ethnic backgrounds, and sexual orientations are winning elections. For example, Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard is the first American Samoan and the first Hindu member of Congress. Congresswoman Kyrsten Sinema is the first bi-sexual Representative (O'Dowd, 2013) while Senator Tammy Baldwin is the first lesbian Senator in Congress. Future research could look at how issues of race, religion, ethnicity, and sexual orientation all impact appearance when it comes to female politicians.

One limitation of this study was that the data were collected during a non-election year. Without the time pressure and resource constraints that campaigns bear upon a candidate, interviews over coffee do not fully capture the essence of the politician's campaign experience. Thus, further research could focus on one politician's campaign and analyze it as it unfolds in real time. Provided access is granted, observation data could be used to complement interviews, focus groups and secondary data analysis to create a vivid picture of her lived experiences during an actual campaign.

Another limitation of this dissertation is that the sample group of voters was comprised of suburban, educated citizens from North Carolina. This focus precludes how issues of appearance for female politicians may be perceived among urban or rural constituents or in different regions across the United States such as the mid-west, west coast or New England. Furthermore, education is an important predictor of both turnout and party affiliation (Fesnic, 2008), therefore it is critical to evaluate the sentiments of voters across all education levels. People with low-levels of education may perceive the appearance of female politicians differently than the participant sample used in this dissertation. Finally, while I interviewed several women in high-level political offices of both the executive and legislative branches, I did not gain access to politicians such as Sarah Palin, Hillary Clinton and Michelle Bachmann, all of whom have run in presidential campaigns. The perceptions of a presidential candidate would add depth and dimension to understanding the challenges faced by a female politician.

In conclusion, this study has opened the door to investigation of an overlooked topic in the fields of political marketing, appearance management, and women's studies.

Focusing on the appearance of a female politician rather than her abilities is one form of discrimination, done not only to propagate the difference between male and female candidates but to highlight the superiority of the former in the role of natural leader. Ingrained gender biases devalue the female and the feminine which, as posited by psychoanalytic theory, stem from unconscious biases toward women as well as fears of loss of power (Edwards, 2009; Mitchell, 1974; Tosone, 2009). However, as political marketing becomes more visual in nature (De Landtsheer et al., 2008; Jackson, 2003), the role of appearance will continue to grow in importance as marketers and politicians must find ways to combat these unconscious biases to run successful campaigns. Consequently, as more female politicians enter the political arena, studies like this dissertation become vital to their successes, and to the success of a democracy in which males and females are valued equally as politicians and as people.

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview Schedule for Female Politicians

1. When did you decide to enter politics?
2. How long and in what capacity have you served?
3. What do you think is the most important aspect of a politician's campaign?
4. How important is the campaign message?
5. Do you think the politician is a part of that message?
6. Do you think a politician's appearance matters to the voters?
7. Do you think the voters are influenced by the appearance of a politician? If so, how do you think it influences them?
8. What do you think a politician's appearance communicates to voters?
9. Do you think it changes for male and female politicians? If so, how? And why?
10. Do you think men and women are judged differently based on their appearance?
11. How are they judged differently?
12. What do voters infer from a female politician's appearance? How? Why?
13. Does the inference change depending on whether the politician is running for a city council seat or a senate seat or a presidential election? If so, how? Why?
14. How do you think the media portrays women running for office at various levels such as city council, state legislature, governor, senator or representative in Congress, VP or Presidential posts?

15. We have seen in recent history several women such as Michelle Bachmann and Hillary Clinton run for presidential nomination, as well as Sarah Palin who ran as the Vice Presidential candidate in 2008. There was a lot of focus on their appearance in cases. Why do you think happened? Do you think it impacted voters? If so, how?
16. How do you think the field has changed for female politicians since you have been in politics?
17. Do women ‘manage’ their appearance to influence voters? Please explain.
18. Do men and women infer different things about a female politician’s appearance than a man’s? How Why?
19. Do you think a politician’s race matters when it comes to his/ her appearance? Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
20. Do you think a politician’s sexual orientation matters when it comes to his/ her appearance? Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
21. Do you think a politician’s weight matters when it comes to his/ her appearance? Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
22. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to add?

Interview Schedule for Political Aides, Staff, and Politician Consultants

1. Could you please tell me which politician you have worked for and in what capacity?

2. Based on your experience, do you think a politician's appearance matters to the voters?
3. Do you think the voters are influenced by the appearance of the political candidate? If so, how do you think it influences them?
4. What do you think a politician's appearance communicates to voters?
5. Do you think it changes for male and female politicians? If so, how? And why?
6. Do you think men and women are judged differently based on their appearance?
7. How are they judged differently?
8. What do voters infer from a female politician's appearance? How? Why?
9. Does the inference change depending on whether the politician is running for a city council seat or a senate seat or a presidential election? If so, how? Why?
10. How do you think the media portrays women running for office at various levels such as city council, state legislature, governor, senator or representative in Congress, VP or Presidential posts?
11. We have seen in recent history several women such as Michelle Bachmann and Hillary Clinton run for presidential nomination, as well as Sarah Palin who ran as the Vice Presidential candidate in 2008. There was a lot of focus on their appearance in cases. Why do you think happened? Do you think it impacted voters? If so, how?
12. How do you think the field has changed for female politicians since you started working as a staff/ aide or political consultant?

13. As a staff/ aide/ politician consultant, do you think female politicians ‘manage’ their appearance to influence voters? Please explain.
14. What is your role in managing the female politician’s appearance?
15. How do you think such management changes the voter’s perception of a female politician?
16. Do men and women infer different things about a female politician’s appearance than a man’s? How Why?
17. Do you think a politician’s race matters when it comes to his/ her appearance? Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
18. Do you think a politician’s sexual orientation matters when it comes to his/ her appearance? Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
19. Do you think a politician’s weight matters when it comes to his/ her appearance? Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
20. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to add?

Interview Schedule for Volunteers, PACs and Media

1. Could you please tell me about your involvement in politics?
2. Have you worked with specific politicians? If so, could you please tell me which politician and how you worked with them?
3. Based on your experience, do you think a politician’s appearance matters to the voters?

4. Do you think the voters are influenced by the appearance of the political candidate? If so, how do you think it influences them?
5. What do you think a politician's appearance communicates to voters?
6. Do you think it changes for male and female politicians? If so, how? And why?
7. Do you think men and women are judged differently based on their appearance?
8. How are they judged differently?
9. What do voters infer from a female politician's appearance? How? Why?
10. Does the inference change depending on whether the politician is running for a city council seat or a senate seat or a presidential election? If so, how? Why?
11. How do you think the media portrays women running for office at various levels such as city council, state legislature, governor, senator or representative in Congress, VP or Presidential posts?
12. We have seen in recent history several women such as Michelle Bachmann and Hillary Clinton run for presidential nomination, as well as Sarah Palin who ran as the Vice Presidential candidate in 2008. There was a lot of focus on their appearance in cases. Why do you think happened? Do you think it impacted voters? If so, how?
13. How do you think the field has changed for female politicians since you got involved in the field?
14. Would a politician's appearance impact your decision to volunteer for them/ fund them through your PAC/ influence how you cover the story? Would it differ for men and women?

15. As a volunteer, member of a PAC/ media, do female politician's 'manage' their appearance to influence voters? Please explain.
16. Do you have a role in how female politicians manage their appearance?
17. How do you think such management changes the voter's perception of a female politician? If possible, can you please give me an example?
18. Do men and women infer different things about a female politician's appearance than a man's? How Why?
19. Do you think a politician's race matters when it comes to his/ her appearance?
Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
20. Do you think a politician's sexual orientation matters when it comes to his/ her appearance? Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
21. Do you think a politician's weight matters when it comes to his/ her appearance?
Does it differ for men and women? If so how? Why?
22. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to add?

APPENDIX B

IRB CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN PARTICIPANT: LONG FORM

Project Title: Investigating the Role of Appearance Management for Politicians.

Project Director: Dr. Nancy Hodges

What is the study about?

This is a research project. The purpose of this study is to examine how politicians are affected by and use appearance management in the political environment.

Why are you asking me?

I am asking you to participate because as a politician, political aide/ staff member, political consultant, PAC member, volunteer for a politician or member of a media outlet working with politicians your perspectives on the role of appearance management in the political environment will provide unique insight into the topic.

What will you ask me to do if I agree to be in the study?

You will be asked to be interviewed regarding your perceptions of appearance management in the political environment, and how it influences the politicians and the voters. On agreement to be interviewed, the interview will last approximately 1-2 hours. I will also ask you to be available for a review of your interview transcript once complete. The review is optional. This review will take approximately 1 to 2 hours.

Is there any audio/video recording?

Digital audio recording or in case of online chats, chat transcripts will be used to ensure reliability of data collected and to capture your perspectives on appearance management and the political process. Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the tape, confidentiality for things you say on the tape cannot be guaranteed, although the researcher will try to limit access to the tape as described below.

What are the dangers to me?

The Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to participants. As stated above, there is a slight risk of a breach of confidentiality. Measures that will be implemented to minimize this risk are described in the confidentiality section below.

If you have any concerns about your rights or how you are being treated, please contact the Director at the Office of Research Integrity at UNCG at 336-256-1482. Questions, concerns or complaints about this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study can be answered by Dr. Nancy Hodges, who may be contacted at 336-256-0291 or njnelson@uncg.edu, or Minita Sanghvi at 336-210-3258 or mjsanghvi@uncg.edu.

Are there any benefits to me for taking part in this research study?

There are no direct benefits to participants of this study.

Are there any benefits to society as a result of me taking part in this research?

Your participation may help to shed light on role of appearance management in the political environment and how it influences politicians and voters. This could help the politicians better market themselves in future campaigns

Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?

There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

UNCG IRB
Approved Consent Form
Valid 5/30/13 to 5/27/14

How will you keep my information confidential?

Consent forms will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the Principal Investigator's campus office, audio files will be password protected, and participants will not be identified by name when data are disseminated. All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. Consent forms will be kept for three years after the close of the study and destroyed by shredding. Audio files will be kept password protected on the student researcher's home computer for a minimum of five to a maximum of seven years upon completion of the study, after which point the files will be erased. There will be a file linking participants' identities to pseudonyms that will be used in published materials. This file will be kept separate from the data and will be erased no more than seven years after the close of the study. If you choose to email your responses or participate in online chat: Absolute confidentiality of data provided through the internet cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access.

What if I want to leave the study?

You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw at any time, without penalty. If you do withdraw, it will not affect you in any way. If you choose to withdraw, you may request that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in a de-identifiable state.

What about new information/changes in the study?

If significant new information relating to the study becomes available which may relate to your willingness to continue to participate, this information will be provided to you.

Voluntary Consent by Participant:

By signing this consent form you are agreeing that you read, or it has been read to you, and you fully understand the contents of this document and are openly willing consent to take part in this study. All of your questions concerning this study have been answered. By signing this form, you are agreeing that you are 18 years of age or older and are agreeing to participate, or have the individual specified above as a participant participate, in this study described to you by Minita Sanghvi.

UNCG IRB
Approved Consent Form
Valid 5/30/13 to 5/29/14

APPENDIX C

FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE FOR VOTERS

1. As voters are you influenced by the appearances of a politician? If so, how? If not, why?
2. What kinds of information does a politician's appearance communicate to voters?
3. Is this different for male or female politicians? Is it different for male or female voters?
4. Are men and women judged differently based on their appearance? If so, how are they judged differently?
5. Does it differ depending on whether the politician is running for a city council seat, senate seat or a presidential election? If so, how? Why?
6. We have seen in recent history several women such as Michelle Bachmann and Hillary Clinton run for presidential nomination, as well as Sarah Palin who ran as the Vice Presidential candidate in 2008. There was a lot of focus on their appearance in cases. Why do you think happened? Did it impact your vote? Why or why not?
7. Do you think female politician's race matters when it comes to her appearance? If so, how? Why?
8. Do you think female politician's sexual orientation matters when it comes to her appearance? If so, how? Why?

9. Do you think female politician's weight matters when it comes to her appearance?

If so, how? Why?

10. Is there anything we did not talk about that you would like to discuss?

APPENDIX D

IRB CONSENT FORM FOR FOCUS GROUPS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN PARTICIPANT: LONG FORM

Project Title: Investigating the Role of Appearance Management for Politicians.

Project Director: Dr. Nancy Hodges

Participant's Name: _____

What is the study about?

This is a research project. The purpose of this study is to examine how politicians are affected by and use appearance management in the political environment.

Why are you asking me?

I am asking you to participate because as a registered voter interested in politics, your perspectives on the role of appearance management in the political environment will provide unique insight into the topic.

What will you ask me to do if I agree to be in the study?

You will be asked to participate in a focus group regarding your perceptions of appearance management in the political environment, and how it influences the politicians and the voters. On agreement to be interviewed, the focus group will last approximately 1-2 hours. I will also ask you to be available for a review of your focus group transcript once complete. The review is optional. This review will take approximately 1 to 2 hours.

Is there any audio/video recording?

Digital audio recording will be used to ensure reliability of data collected and to capture your perspectives on appearance management and the political process. Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the tape, confidentiality for things you say on the tape cannot be guaranteed, although the researcher will try to limit access to the tape as described below.

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If you have any concerns about your rights or how you are being treated, please contact the Director at the Office of Research Integrity at UNCG at 336-256-1482. Questions, concerns or complaints about this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study can be answered by Dr. Nancy Hodges, who may be contacted at 336-256-0291 or njnelson@uncg.edu, or Minita Sanghvi at 336-210-3258 or mjsanghvi@uncg.edu.

Are there any benefits to me for taking part in this research study?

There are no direct benefits to participants of this study.

Are there any benefits to society as a result of me taking part in this research?

Your participation may help to shed light on role of appearance management in the political environment and how it influences politicians and voters. This could help the politicians better market themselves in future campaigns

Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?

There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

UNCG IRB
Approved Consent Form
Valid 5/30/13 to 5/29/14

APPENDIX E

PERMISSION TO USE C-SPAN IMAGE



Minita Sanghvi <mjsanghv@uncg.edu>

License Inquiry: N00152283 (University of North Carolina Greensboro)

Strother, Steve <sstrother@c-spanarchives.org>

Fri, Feb 28, 2014 at 9:03 AM

Reply-To: "Strother, Steve" <messages.812761.1646389.df5451d639@messages.netsuite.com>

To: mjsanghv@uncg.edu

Hello,

You are permitted to use the still image in your dissertation.

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